

Immigrant Associations in the Metropolitan Area of Finland

Forms of Mobilisation, Participation and Representation

Sanna Saksela-Bergholm

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

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PART I

1 Introduction

Finnish authorities and researchers have started to pay attention to forms of participation¹ among immigrants due to Finland's recent status as an immigration country. In Finland as well as in most other European countries, immigrants have mainly settled in the capital area or in other large cities¹. Their incorporation into municipalities is challenging civil servants to find new forms of inclusive mechanisms where both the immigrants' interests and the existing and changing socio-political conditions of municipalities must be taken into account. Previous studies have shown that immigrant associations have been an important tool for several immigrant groups to get their interest and claims heard in the receiving society. Immigrant associations can act as bridge-builders for the inclusion of immigrants by participating in the decision making process and by acting as a representative voice for their group. In addition, associations can mobilise their ethnic group members to participate in collective activities which can improve their conditions in the receiving society and help the immigrants to strengthen their ethnic identity.

1.1. The Aim of the Study

The objective of this study is twofold. Firstly, the aim is to clarify what kind of role immigrant associations play in the societal integration² of immigrants

¹ For a profound insight of immigrant groups settlement into European cities and of their participation in their receiving state see Penninx et al (2004), and in particular the comparative study done by Michel Alexander (2004:57-84).

² Integration refers in this study to a two-way process between immigrant associations and civil

into Finnish society. The focus is on the ability of immigrant associations to mobilise its ethnic group members to participate in the socio-economic, cultural and political domains of Finnish society and in certain cases even beyond it. Attention will be given to activities which take place particularly at local, national and transnational level.

Secondly, this study focuses on the political integrative aims of immigrant associations by exploring their opportunities to participate and represent the interest of their ethnic group in local and national policy making. In this study political integration refers to, on the one hand, practices organised by the immigrant associations with the goal of improving the access and presence of associations in the planning and decision making process, and on the other, to civil servants initiatives and strategies to cooperate with immigrant associations. The national and local integration policy also influences immigrants' opportunities to organise themselves (Pyykkönen 2007a, Fennema and Tillie 2004, Soysal 1999).

This study has six main questions which are connected to the integration process of immigrants and of their associations:

1. What does the organisational landscape of immigrant associations look like?
2. To what extent do immigrant (women's) associations (a) mobilise their ethnic group members to be incorporated into Finnish society, and (b) strengthen the ethnic identity of their ethnic group members?
3. How is the integrative agenda set by local and national authorities?
4. What are civil servants' perceptions of the immigrant associations aims?
5. How do immigrant associations cooperate with local authorities in the Helsinki metropolitan area, and what kind of contacts do they have with the local advisory boards?
6. Do the immigrant associations get their interest heard in the National Advisory Body of Ethnic Relations – ETNO?

servants. On the one hand it refers to inclusion of the immigrants to the socio-economic domain of the Finnish society and at the same time maintaining their own culture. On the other, integration refers to civil servants recognition and acceptance of new cultural features, as long as these do not violate the rights of people (see also sub chapter 2.5).

The first research question can be described as a broader one, which studies grassroots' actors, such as immigrant and Finnish voluntary associations, whereas the following five questions focussed on issues related to mobilisation, participation and representation. The core questions are the last two, which are central interaction questions, aimed at giving an insight into the role of immigrant associations in immigrants' societal integration to Finnish society and to the participation and representation of immigrant associations in local and national policy-making.

1.2 The Theories, Research Setting and Data

Theoretical framework

Several studies focussing on the organisation of immigrant groups in their receiving society are based on ethnicity and race theories (Rex 1994, Rex, Joly and Wilpert 1987, Sudbury 1998). This can be partly explained by the fact that it is logical for immigrants to establish networks and associations which are not based on class but ethnicity, which is often ascribed by the majority population in the receiving society (Ireland 1994: 14). Despite the fact that ethnicity plays a role in the establishment of associations and in the mobilisation of their ethnic group members it is not enough to explain the influence of the institutional channels on the associations. Therefore this study also explores the immigrant associations' activities and their opportunities for participation and representation by applying two theoretical approaches: ethnic resource mobilisation and institutional channelling. The first one, *ethnic resource mobilisation* approach analysis the ethnic organisation, particularly of oppressed immigrant groups in their receiving society (see also Drury 1994, Ireland 1994). In this study ethnic resource mobilisation approach aims to explain the interaction internally and between associations. It enables the exploration of how existing resources within an immigrant association are allocated, such as subsidies, membership fees and the exchange of information etc. Furthermore, this theoretical view permits an analysis of how immigrant associations use their organisational skills, activities and contacts in the mobilisation of their ethnic group members.

The second theoretical approach, *institutional channelling*, attempts to clarify the influence of the institutional setting of the receiving society on the (political) opportunities of immigrants (Ireland 1994). Institutionalisation as such has often been used in studies exploring the importance of citizenship and naturalisation in the integration of immigrants and refugees or other ethnic minority groups (Kastoryano 2002, Verba, Lehman Schlozman and Brady 1995). Institutional channelling, which is closely related to political opportunity structure³ permits the exploration of immigration policy at local level, its institutions and programmes aimed at immigrants as well as legislative documents supporting the inclusion of immigrants and their associations into Finnish society.

The aim of developing the theoretical framework is to provide tools for the analysis of the results of immigrant associations and their connection with their ethnic groups and Finnish society. The ethnic resource mobilisation approach illustrates the influence of external (e.g. contacts to the homeland or external financing) and internal (e.g. leader- and membership) resources on the management and function of immigrant associations. The institutional channelling shows the influence of integration policies on civil servants and on their work with immigrant associations.

The research setting

The first research question explored *the organisational landscape of immigrant associations*. The idea of studying immigrant associations in Finland started from a Nordic joint study which took place in 2002. The aim was to explore the role immigrant associations played in Nordic societies and how these could influence democratisation (see also Mikkelsen (ed.) 2003). The problem with the Finnish case was that there had been no previous research conducted. The Finnish case, which I was in charge of at CEREN⁴, did not find a complete answer to the question, but it worked as a description of immigrants' associational landscape in Finland. The data collected for the Nordic study

3 In the case this study would focus the political participation of a certain ethnic group(s) then 'political opportunity structure' would be suitable for that (Koopmans and Statham (eds.) 2000, see also Kriesi & al. 1997:52).

4 CEREN - Centre for Research on Ethnic Relations and Nationalism at Swedish School of Social Science, University of Helsinki.

worked as an initial charting and as a valuable resource in the analysis of this study. It gave particularly important information on the structure and function of immigrant associations as well as some preliminary information about the human and material resources of the associations, such as contacts and financing (see also Saksela 2003).

Research Question 2 studied *the immigrant associations' mobilisation of their ethnic group members and their associations' interest to strengthen the ethnic identity of the members*. Special attention has been given to immigrant women's associations. Data has been collected from five mono/multi-ethnic immigrant women's associations in the Helsinki metropolitan area during 2003-2005. My aim was to analyse structures and functions of the immigrant women's associations and to what extent these associations mobilise immigrant women to be incorporated into Finnish society. Data from immigrant associations, (including both men and women) have been collected both during the Nordic study and the study of cooperation forms between immigrant associations and local authorities.

Research Question 3 explored *the integrative agenda of civil servants, which is politically influenced by institutional features, laws and directives*. The data relating to the integrative agenda has been collected during the research process. Research Question 4 focused on the *civil servants' perceptions of the immigrant associations aims*. The perceptions are discussed in the connection with Research Question 5. The analysis of the civil servants' integrative agenda and perceptions has been important background information in the exploration of the relations between immigrant associations and institutional actors.

The research questions at the interaction level focused on the connection between immigrant associations and institutional actors, such as municipal and governmental actors. Research Question 5 explored *the cooperation forms between local authorities and immigrant associations in the capital area* (consisting of the municipalities of Espoo, Helsinki and Vantaa) (see also Saksela 2005). Here, the objective was to find out how different kinds participative opportunities are used by immigrant associations at the local level. Are there official contacts between immigrant associations and local authorities and how do immigrant associations participate in activities

organised by municipalities? Research question 6 focused on *the representation of immigrant associations in the National Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations – ETNO*. The interest was to find out how immigrant associations get their voice heard in a national advisory board and if the associations are included in the planning and counselling processes. I analysed at national level the representative opportunities for immigrant associations in ETNO.

All six research questions respond in different ways to the role of immigrant associations a) in the integration process of immigrants into Finnish society and b) to their political integrative aims taking place mainly in the Helsinki Metropolitan area. The charting of immigrant associations provides valuable background information concerning the organisation process of immigrant associations, whereas interviews conducted with immigrant women's associations give a more profound insight into the goals and activities of the associations. The integrative agenda and perceptions of civil servants have been useful in the exploration of the participative (e.g. joint projects with local authorities) and representative opportunities (e.g. presence in consultative bodies) of immigrant associations in Finnish society. This study was inspired by the Act on the *Integration of Immigrants and reception of Asylum Seekers* (L 493/1999) and by the Council of State report (VNS 5/2002), which highlighted the active role of local authorities and voluntary associations in the integration of immigrants into Finnish society⁵.

Data collection and analyses

The collection of data took place during the following periods: charting of immigrant associations (2002), collection of data on immigrant women's associations (2003 until mid 2005), exploration of the forms of cooperation between local authorities and immigrant associations (2004) and data collection from ETNO (2004 – 2005).

⁵ The Council of State Report of Finland follows partly the guidelines about the community integration policy described in COM 2000/0757 final: 'While integration is primarily the role of Member States, governments should share this responsibility with civil society notably at the local level where integration measures must be implemented. The key to success is the establishment of micro-level actions based on partnerships between all the many actors who need to be involved: regional and local authorities and their political leaders, especially those of the larger towns where many migrants settle, providers of education, healthcare, social welfare, the police, the media, the social partners, non-governmental organisations and migrants themselves'.

The data was collected using *qualitative methods*, such as telephone interviews, e-mail questionnaires and face to face interviews. Background information on immigrant associations was collected by semi-structured telephone interviews, while a structured e-mail questionnaire was sent to local authorities working with immigrant associations. Data collection from the Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations – ETNO consisted both of semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Document analysis worked as a useful method in the analysis of documents related to integration policy. Laws, directives and other legislative documents and reports have provided important secondary data on the Finnish institutional system. This was done mainly in the analysis of the top-down questions. In addition to the above mentioned methods, I applied ethnographic method in the data collection from immigrant women's associations. The aim of this method was to give a comprehensive, 'truthful' description of immigrant women's associations' landscape by applying participant observations, and both open-ended and semi-structured interviews (see also Stewart 1998, Wolcott 1994). The descriptive analysis of this data was done by applying contextualised explanations that helped to identify the connection between the strands of data.

The data in total consist of seventy-one interviews, which were conducted with members of immigrant associations and civil servants. Interviews conducted with members of immigrant associations consisted of: twenty-four telephone interviews, six face-to-face semi-structured interviews with members of mono-ethnic and multi-ethnic immigrant associations and of sixteen semi-structured interviews with members from five immigrant women's associations. The civil servant interviews consisted of twenty-two semi-structured e-mail interviews with local authorities, three semi-structured interviews with former members of ETNO. In the analysis of participative opportunities of immigrant associations in Helsinki, I have used some previous data from The International Cultural Centre Caisa ⁶, which was established by the City of Helsinki. This consists of one interview with the director and another with the activity coordinator of Caisa.

Additionally to the qualitative data some quantitative data was collected in the charting of immigrant associations and of their respective ethnic groups.

6 For further information of GLOCALMIG study see Saksela and Salmenhaara 2004.

The data is based mainly on the charting of immigrant associations in Finland (Saksela 2003) and on information received from Statistics Finland.

1.3 An Overview

Part I introduces the aims of the study and its guiding features. Chapter 1 presents the research objectives, questions and the study design. Chapter 2 introduces some of the key features guiding this study and shows how the migration process and the institutional setting of receiving society can influence on the establishment of an immigrant association.

Part II of this study presents the theoretical framework, the research setting and the methods. Chapter 3 outlines the theoretical framework that is crucial in the understanding of the associational organisation of immigrants. Chapter 4 explores the research setting, data collection and use of methods. It also discusses the data analysis and the reliability and validity of the data.

Part III of the book shows the empirical results of this study. Chapter 5 presents the structure and typology of the immigrant associations in Finland. In this chapter the focus is on the establishment of immigrant associations and on their ethnic and organisational similarities/ differences. In addition, attention is paid to the associations' resource mobilisation and its influence on the ethnic group members. Chapter 6 explores the organisational process of eleven immigrant associations in the capital area. Special attention is given to their associational interests and activity forms. Five immigrant women's associations are dealt with in the chapter separately. Chapter 7 analyses the opportunities of immigrant associations to participate and represent their interests in local and national constitutional institutions. Subsequently, efforts of cooperation between immigrant associations and local authorities are presented and its existing advantages and disadvantages are discussed. The concluding Chapter 8 summarises the results of the study and discusses immigrant associations' possible importance in the future.

2 Immigrant Associations as Actors in Societal Mobilisation

Immigrant associations' opportunities to participate and to represent their ethnic groups' interest in Finnish society depend on several factors. On the one hand, immigrant associations' interest to strengthen the inclusion of their ethnic group members in Finnish society depends on immigrant groups' ethnic and socio-political background, their phase of settlement, and on the other hand by the integrative aims of municipal and governmental actors (Jenkins 1988, Penninx and Martiniello 2004, Schrover and Vermeulen 2005). This chapter presents the background features guiding the organisational landscape in Finland and their position in Finnish civil society. It also presents features connecting the grassroots actors (immigrant and Finnish voluntary associations) with the institutional actors (governmental and municipal actors).

Since the late 1990s, researchers have been studying immigrants' societal participation and the role of immigrants' associational life in the integration of immigrants into Finnish society (Pyykkönen 2003, 2007b, Saksela 2003, 2005, Valtonen 1997, Wahlbeck 1999). The majority of the literature review discussed in this Chapter refers to studies done mainly in other Western European countries due to the fairly small number of studies conducted in the Finnish context. This chapter discusses the connection between the migration process and the establishment of immigrant associations in Western Europe and in Finland. Recent migration to Finland and the Helsinki Metropolitan area is also shortly presented.

The six research questions are connected to grassroots actors and governmental and national actors presented in sub chapters 2.6 to 2.7. The relations between immigrant associations and local authorities are explored by features of interaction consisting of societal integration, societal domains, forms of interaction and of informal and formal channels.

2.1 The Acculturation Process

The assumption in this study is that depending on the participative and representative opportunities, immigrant associations can have either an integrative, assimilative, marginalised or segregated position in Finnish society. To what extent immigrant associations are included into Finnish society will be explored in sub chapter 6.4.

Since the beginning of the 20th century the interaction of people from different cultures has caught the attention of researchers. In the 1930s American anthropologists started to pay attention to interaction between different ethnic groups. Redfield, Linton and Herskovits (1936) defined interaction as acculturation in the following way:

Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups... under this definition acculturation is to be distinguished from culture change, of which it is but one aspect, and assimilation, which is at times a phase of acculturation.

Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits in 1936:149

Later the authors elaborated on the meaning of acculturative changes by stating:

Culture change that is initiated by the conjunction of two or more autonomous cultural systems. Acculturative change may be the consequence of direct cultural transmission; it may be derived from noncultural causes, such as ecological or demographic modification induced by an impinging culture; it may be delayed, as with internal adjustments following upon the acceptance of alien traits or patterns; or it may be a reactive adaptation of traditional modes of life. Its dynamics can be seen as the selective adaptation of values systems, the processes of integration and differentiation, the generation of developmental sequences, and the operation of role determinants and personality factors.

Social Science Research Council 1954:974

Acculturation process has become a very popular object of study in particular among cross-cultural psychologists (see e.g. Berry and Sam (Eds.) 2006, Jasinskaja-Lahti 2000, Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind and Vesala 2002). Psychological acculturation, in turn, is used by psychologists to make a distinction between individual and group level experiences of cultural contacts. At the individual level the focus is on changes, which a person experiences when (s)he is in contact with other cultures, whereas at the group level the focus is on a larger acculturation process, which a member's group is going through (Graves 1967).

Berry (1992) points out that, ethnic groups choose between four kinds acculturation strategies in their host societies. The acculturation strategies can be differentiated between assimilation, integration, marginalisation and segregation / separation. *Assimilation* refers to the ethnic groups' inclusion in the mainstream society where it adapts the society's socio-economic norms. Assimilation is also known as a form of gradual abolition of difference (Bauböck 1996:114). *Integration* refers to the model where the minority group adapts the values and norms of the majority society and where again the majority society aims to modify and apply its values and norms in a way that fulfils the needs of the minority groups. *Segregation* can be seen as a form where the majority society aims to include a member from an ethnic group to the majority society. Similar to segregation is *separation* referring again to an (ethnic) minority groups' aim to exclude its member(s) from the majority society. *Marginalisation* takes place when an individual or an entire group is neither included to the majority society nor to its ethnic community. (Berry 1992, see also Bauböck 1996:114, Forsander 2001:37).

Integration: a two way process

The concept of integration will get somewhat more attention in this study than the other acculturative concepts, due its central position in the activities organised by immigrant associations and integrative events organised by civil servants.

In social sciences the use of concept *integration* as such is not a new phenomenon. As Durkheim (1893) showed in his famous work 'De la division du travail social', the division of labour increases the dependency between

individuals which in turn strengthens their integration into society. A lack of integration can have a negative influence on the societal solidarity. In immigration studies integration is mostly used in the context of inclusion or exclusion of the immigrant into or from the socio-economic, political or cultural sphere of the receiving society (Bauböck 1995).

Finnish authorities working on immigration and multicultural issues use the concept of integration, or “kotouttaminen” in the context of the integration act. In this act a distinction is made between measures taken by the immigrants themselves (‘kotoutuminen’) and measures taken by the authorities (‘kotouttaminen’). The first one refers to ‘the personal development of immigrants, aimed at participation in work life and in functioning in society, and at the preservation of culture’, while the latter refers to ‘the measures taken and resources provided by the authorities to promote such integration.’ (L 493/1999, §2). Social researchers prefer to talk about integration as an ongoing process, and not, a fixed state, thus implying a progressive course of action through which immigrants adapt to the Finnish society (Forsander 2001:38-43, Valtonen 1997, Wahlbeck 1999). In other words, integration takes place during a reciprocal interaction between the immigrants and the members of the receiving society. In this study, integration is perceived as a two-way process, where the immigrant can maintain his culture, religion and language while at the same time become included in the socio-economic domain and partly also in the political domain of the receiving society (see also 2.8.1). At the same time the Finnish society receives new cultural habits from the immigrants.

To be more precise integration of immigrants can be described as operating at three levels: the individual, organisational and institutional level (Penninx and Martiniello 2004:142-143). The individual level describes mechanisms to help the immigrant with housing, employment, education as well as with societal inclusion into the receiving society. The individual level is sufficient in explaining the interest and needs of a person but does not take into account the collective ethnic identity. The organisational level is useful in the exploration of collective interests of immigrant groups. These can take place through their ethnic associations where immigrants can express their cultural, religious and

political interests. The institutional level focuses on cultural and religious institutions which are aimed for or established/maintained by immigrants (ibid), such as synagogues or mosques. This study will mainly focus on the organisational level, although the influence of individual and institutional levels will also be taken into consideration in the analysis of immigrants' associational activities.

Societal and political integration

In this study integration refers to immigrants associations' equal opportunities to participate and represent their ethnic group interests in Finnish civil society. It can be described as a two-way process between immigrant associations and civil servants. The integrative efforts are explored from two dimensions.

The first dimension consists of societal integration referring to the efforts of immigrant associations to include immigrants into labour market and to the educational sphere without losing the maintenance of own ethnic identity and culture.

The second dimension consists of political integration referring to immigrant associations' opportunities to participate in planning and decision-making at local and national multicultural councils. In other words, political participation does not refer in this study to immigrants' participation in elections. Instead, the focus is on the immigrant associations' involvement in councils and advisory boards working with integrative issues (see also Enzinger and Biezeveld 2000:35).

Both the societal and political integration require civil servants recognition of new cultural features. In practice, a successful integration of immigrants would consist of an active top-down policy involving both representatives of immigrant communities and of their associations (see also Penninx and Martiniello 2004:141). This would also require immigrant associations and ethnic communities to mobilise their ethnic group members in civic activities. Immigrant associations can have at least three important functions in the implementation of policies. The associations can 'support emancipation, 'contribute to social integration' by facilitating the inclusion of its members to the receiving society and finally by having 'an intermediary function' between the receiving society and the immigrants (Fennema and Tilly 1999a:20). The

participative role of the immigrant associations in local policy-making depends much on how civil servants take into account the immigrant associations in their work. The research settings of this study will explore in what extent the societal and political integration will take place in the practices of immigrant associations and civil servants (see also Chapters 5, 6 and 7).

The paradox of integration and multiculturalism

Since the increase of immigration at the beginning of the 1990s, issues of integration and multiculturalism have gained a significant place on the political agenda (Puuronen 2004, Matinheikki-Kokko 2001). Unfortunately these concepts have been fairly broadly used both by civil servants and by media and have caused confusion. Lepola, who studied the political discussion on immigration politics in the 1990s, has criticised policymakers for a too loose conceptualisation of integration (Lepola 2000). In practice, little weight has been given to immigrant know-how of their own culture, despite the fact that politicians are aware of the “dual process” which includes *both* the members from the receiving society and the immigrants.

The concept of *multiculturalism* requires a critical review as well, mainly because of its use among academics and civil servants as a ‘doctrine for immigrant integration’ and it is frequently associated with ‘migration-based ethnicity’ (Joppke 2004:239). In a similar way, the concept of ‘multiculturalism’ has been taken into use by the Finnish government during their planning of the refugee and immigration programme at the beginning of 1990s (Lepola 2000, Matinheikki-Kokko 2001, Saukkonen 2007). Nevertheless, it should be kept in mind that Finland has always been a crossing-point between East and West. For example, Finland has several national, ethnic and language minorities (Sami, Roma, Tatars and the Swedish speaking Finns). Lepola (2000:209) argues that the conceptualisation of multiculturalism by the government is fairly ambiguous; on one hand the state expects the immigrants (at individual level) to adapt to the Finnish social service system and labour market and on the other, the state governs how civil servants should take into account the cultural background of the immigrants. What regards the maintenance of immigrants’ own culture the government does not provide any clear tools for its maintenance, instead there appears to be an unwritten assumption that

immigrants can take with them their cultural heritage and move it to an other place without it being affected by the receiving state (ibid:209-210). This is not the case. The institutional system of the receiving societies influences the maintenance of immigrants own culture, e.g. by setting guidelines regarding practices of religion, customs and norms that are not recognised in the Finnish system. Wahlbeck (1999) points out that the Finnish integration policy is rather an assimilation policy for refugees without realistic goals for refugees. It is important to carefully explore whether the formal and informal channels can have a facilitating or repressive influence on immigrants in Finland. For example, in what extension do local authorities include immigrant associations or immigrants in general into the planning process on integration issues. In this study multiculturalism is mainly used in the context of multicultural activities referring to activities organised by and for people who come from different ethnic groups.

2.2 Migration to Finland Between 1990 and 2005

Finland has been traditionally described as an emigration country. The first refugee group arrived in 1973 from Chile to Finland, but during that time there were no organised resettlement programmes. In 1986 a resettlement programme was initiated and applied one year later when Vietnamese quota refugees arrived to Turku (Valtonen 1994:99). During this time period the number of socio-economic immigrants was small.

Since the beginning of the 1990s the number of immigrants has increased. This has been mainly to do with: return migration (especially with return migration from Sweden to Finland due to the improved economic situation) and the permission of return migrants from Ingria⁷, the increase of socio-economic immigrants (after the dissolution former Soviet Union), UN quota refugees and other refugees (especially the increasing number of refugees (in

⁷ Ingria belongs to a prehistoric area of Baltic Finnish settlement. Since the middle Ages, Ingria was occupied firstly by Votes, followed by Izhors, and later on in the 10th century by the Slavic people (Nylund Oja, Pentikäinen, Horn, Jaakkola and Yli-Vakkuri 1995:177). Ingrians are descendants of Finnish migrants who moved to Russia in the 17th century. Some of them returned to Finland after the fall of the Soviet Union.

the 1990's - Somalis), 'mixed' marriages and the increase of labour migration (Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind and Vesala 2002: 17). By the end of 2005 the number of people born abroad was 176,612, i.e. 3% of the total population (5,255,580.) (Statistics Finland 2005). (The statistics presented in this sub chapter are based on the time period when the empirical data was collected).

The fairly small immigrant and refugee numbers have to do with restrictive Finnish immigration policy. The discussion about the immigration and refugee policy in Finland has mainly focused on the state's role of guiding asylum policy in its most efficient way and at the same time to provide protection for refugees (Lepola 2000). Traditionally, immigrants and refugees have been viewed as a threat to national security and immigration was considered a politically delicate issue in relation to the Soviet Union (Forsander 2002, 23). In addition to fairly strict immigration policy, there is still the distinction making of 'us and the other' by the majority population. During the economic recession the attitudes among the majority population against refugees, particularly from Somalia, Iraq and Iran were very high. One explanation was that the majority population were afraid that foreigners would come and live on the benefits of the Finnish welfare system or take the work from the Finns (Jaakkola 1999). Whatsmore, there was far too little dialogue given in media between xenophobic groups and the foreigners themselves (Raittila and Kutilainen 2000).

Population according to nationality, mother tongue and state of birth

By the end of 2005 there were 113,852 non-citizens of the total population 5,255,580 (see Table 2.2a). A more rational picture of foreigners living in Finland can be obtained by looking at numbers indicating the mother tongue. Finnish is spoken as a mother-tongue by 4,819,819 people while 289,675 use Swedish as mother tongue and 1,752 Sámi use their mother tongue. Finland is a bilingual country with Finnish and Swedish as the official languages. The Finnish government has recognised Sami as an officially spoken language which is also taught in schools. In all, there are 144,334 people who have a foreign language as a mother tongue. The most common foreign mother tongue is Russian followed by other fairly big language groups such as Estonian,

English, Somali, Arabic, Kurdish, Albanian, Chinese and Vietnamese as their mother-tongue. (Statistics Finland 2005).

The gender division between immigrants is quite even, but there are some differences between certain ethnic groups. In 2005, there were 7,810 from the Former Soviet Union of whom 4,398 were women, and 3,998 Thai immigrants of whom 2,849 were women (Statistics Finland 2007). The high number of women from the former Soviet Union and from Thailand can be partly explained by mixed-marriages (Siim 2007, Zechner 2007).

Table 2.2a

Population according to nationality, mother tongue and state of birth in 2005

Population: 5, 255, 580					
Nationality		Mother tongue		State of birth	
Finnish	5, 141, 728	Finnish	4, 819, 819	Finland	5, 078, 968
Foreigners in total	113, 852	Swedish	289, 675	Born abroad in total	176, 612
<i>Biggest groups:</i>		Sami	1, 752	<i>Biggest groups:</i>	
Russian	24, 621	Foreign languages in total	144, 334	Former Soviet Union	40, 196
Estonian	15, 459	<i>Biggest groups:</i>		Sweden	29, 527
Swedish	8, 196	Russian	39, 653	Estonia	12, 597
Somalian	4, 704	Estonian	15, 336	Somalia	5, 060
Serbian and Montenegrin	3, 321	English	8, 928	Former Yugoslavia	5, 030
Iraqi	3, 267	Somali	8, 593	Russia	4, 748
Chinese	2, 992	Arabic	7, 117	Germany	4, 555
German	2, 792	Kurdish	5, 123	Iraq	4, 352
British	2, 762	Albanian	5, 076	China	4, 123
Turkish	2, 621	Chinese	4, 613	Thailand	3, 551
Thai	2, 605	Vietnamese	4, 202	Great Britain	3, 497

Source: Statistics Finland, 2006.

Foreign population in the Helsinki Metropolitan area

The number of foreigners has increased rapidly within the last twenty years. In the late 1980's there were only 12,800 foreigners, i.e. 0.3% of the total population. In 2004 the number of foreigners living in Finland had increased to 107,003 (2.0%) and in the Helsinki Metropolitan area to 46,982 (4.8%). (Munter 2005).

In 2004, 59 591 foreign speaking population lived in the Helsinki Metropolitan area (Munter 2005:12). As Table 2.2b shows, the percentage of foreign language speaking populations is 6.7% in Helsinki, 5.2% in Espoo and in Vantaa 5.6%. (See Table 2.2b).

Table 2.2b Foreign population in the Helsinki Metropolitan area 2004, (Munter 2005:12-13)

Municipal	Foreign citizens	% of foreign citizens	Foreign language speaking population	% of foreign language speaking population
Helsinki	29,635	5.3	37,712	6.7
Espoo	9,275	4.1	11,665	5.2
Vantaa	7,815	4.2	10,321	5.6
Capital area ¹	46,982	4.8	59,951	6.1
Finland	107,003	2.0	124,817	2.4
² This does not include smaller municipalities, such as Kauniainen or Järvenpää				

At the beginning of 2004, the number foreign speaking population was 37,712 in Helsinki. The largest groups in this foreign speaking population in Helsinki consisted of Russian speaking 9,388 (24.9 %), Estonian speaking 4,170 (11.1%), Somali speaking 4,183 (11.1%) and English speaking 2,913 (7.7%) There are also differences between the living areas in the municipalities. For example, in 2004, the most densely populated area for people with a foreign language as a mother tongue is Eastern Helsinki where the foreign speaking population numbered (8.1%) compared to other parts of the city (5.5%). In Eastern Helsinki, 27% were foreign citizens. (Munter 2005: 12, 14-15).

During the same time period the number of immigrants in Espoo was 9,275 based on foreign citizenship (4.1%) but the number increases to 11,665 if it's based on the foreign language speaking population (5.2%). The biggest language groups consisted of: Russian speaking 2,003 (17.2%), Estonian speaking 1,075 (9.2%) and Somali speaking 1,118 (9.6%). These languages correlate with the biggest foreign groups in Finland. The densest area populated by immigrants is Espoo centre. (Munter 2005:12-13).

In Vantaa, 7,815 foreign citizens numbered 4.2% of the total population, whereas the number of foreign language speaking population is 10,321 (5.6%). In 2004, the largest groups amongst this foreign speaking population were

Russian speaking 2,411 (23.4 %), Somali speaking 1,480 (14.3%) and Estonia speaking 1,089 (10.6%). The number of foreigners is particularly high in Korso-Koivukylä and Hakunila where 22% come the Former Soviet Union. (Munter 2005:15).

2.3 Immigrant Associations as a Research Object

Immigrant associations have been studied mainly with a focus on their aims to strengthen the ethnic identity of their group and to act as bridge-builders between the receiving society and their group (Cordero-Guzmán 2005, Fennema 2004, Mikkelsen 2003 (ed.), Rex 1987, Vermeulen 2005). For example, how immigrant associations provide access to their ethnic group members into the socio-economic domain of receiving society (Bloemraad 2005, Jenkins 1988, Pyykkönen 2007b, Saksela 2005, Triandafyllidou and Gropas, (eds) 2007). Migration researchers have also studied the participation of immigrant associations in political practices, such as forms of claims-making, representation and their participation in counselling bodies (Bousetta 2001, Kriesi & al. 1997:52, Koopmans and Statham 2000). There are also a number of studies on the cultural, socio-economic and political transnational contacts between immigrant associations and their country of origin (see e.g. Griffiths 2002, Østergaard-Nielsen 2001, Ouali (ed.) 2004, Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt (eds.) 1999, Portes, Escobar, Radford 2007, Wahlbeck 1999).

Studies on immigrant associations with focus on ethnic organisation process

Migration researchers have paid attention to the existing paradox of the role of immigrant associations, namely on the one hand the associations' aim to support the inclusion of their ethnic group members into the receiving society and on the other, the associations' role to defend the ethnic identity and culture (Layton-Henry 1990, Wihtol de Wenden and Leveau 2001). Breton (1964) showed in his study of institutional completeness of ethnic communities in Canada that the bigger the (social and cultural) differences between ethnic communities and the receiving society are, the easier it is for ethnic communities to establish their own institutions. Members, who have

only few resources in the receiving society, can find support from their ethnic associations. Breton concludes that the formation of an ethnic community is also influenced by the pattern of migration, such as if the migration decision was made by an individual or by a group. The ethnic organizations are dependent on their members' need to emphasise their ethnic identity, which is stressed in communities with a big 'ethnic public' (Breton 1964:205).

The above mentioned study is a good example of how the ethnic community and associations can influence the integration of immigrants either into the receiving society, their own or another ethnic community. In the 1980s, researchers showed how immigrant associations can have a mobilising effect on their ethnic group members, by voicing the needs of immigrants, which can take both a pro- and reactive shape, depending on the integration policy (Layton-Henry 1990, Olzak 1983, Rex and Drury (eds.) 1994). In the 1990s studies on immigrant associations focused much on local and trans-level practices. One reason for this is the fact that the immigrants who lack voting rights in the majority of the European members states look for other kinds of participative options. Immigrants' motivation to participate in the civil society of the receiving country also depends on the phase of migration (Baumann 2002, Penninx et al. 2004).

In the 1990s researchers started to study the immigrant and refugee communities in Finland and showed that the ethnic communities provide an important social support for those immigrants who do not otherwise have a social network (Valtonen 1997, Wahlbeck 1999). Beyond the social contacts, ethnic communities and their associations provide information and help about Finnish society to newly arrived immigrants. Wahlbeck's (1999) study of the Kurdish diaspora pays attention to the networks and associations established by Kurds living in England and Finland. Pyykkönen (2003) and Saksela (2003) have explored the organisational process of immigrants in Finland.

Pyykkönen has studied immigrant associations in the Tampere and Jyväskylä regions and according to him, immigrant associations provide important cultural activities for their members and govern them by showing how the members can take part in civic activities Pyykkönen (2007b). His PhD thesis (Pyykkönen 2007b) is the first doctoral thesis in the field which was

conducted in Finland. The focus of Pyykkönen's work is much on the discourses on ethnicity, identity and culture perceived by members of immigrant associations. It also explores the administrative expectations of immigrant associations' integration into Finnish society. The analysis of the latter is on administrative documents. In her charting of immigrant associations in the Helsinki Metropolitan area, Saksela argues that immigrant associations can have an important integrative function for newly arrived immigrants, but the role of the associations could be even more visible if the interaction between the majority population and the immigrant associations would be stronger (Saksela 2003). Martikainen (2004) has studied the religious practices of Muslims and has pointed out how religious associations of Muslims provide an important social venue for the male members of the ethnic community, amongst other things.

*Immigrant associations
as a research object in the socio-economic domain*

Since the 1980s researchers have paid attention to the role of immigrant associations as service providers for the newly arrived immigrants in the USA, amongst others (Basch 1987, Cordero-Guzmán 2005, Jenkins (ed). 1988, Massey and al. 1987). In their studies of the role of social ties and networks Massey and his associates have discussed the importance of immigrant associations as social aid providers for newly arrived immigrants:

Thus far we have considered various social relationships that make up immigrant networks, but no less important are certain institutional mechanisms that facilitate the formation and maintenance of social ties. A variety of voluntary associations established by immigrants in the United States promote regular interpersonal contact, greatly facilitating the process of adaptation and mutual assistance.

Massey and al. (1987:145)

Jenkins and al. (1988) have studied the impact of ethnic associations as social service providers for recently arrived immigrants in USA, England, Israel, and the Netherlands and with some additional information from Australia. One of the main findings was that ethnic associations provide important

information and help to new immigrants in particular to ethnic-sensitive practices, but the associations' opportunities are influenced by the national social programmes and policies of the receiving countries (Jenkins 1988:2). In his study of community based ethnic organisations Cordero-Guzmán also concludes that immigrant associations provide important social functions, such as creation of social ties, and representation in local policies in the co-ordination of municipal and private funds (Cordero-Guzmán 2005).

Researchers have also explored the connection between the governmental and municipal system on the existence of immigrant associations. For example, Bloemraad argues that settlement and policies of multiculturalism can provide both symbolic and material resources for immigrants in their establishment of associations although too much interference can lead to a crowding out effect (Bloemraad 2005). Similar results have also been reached by Caponio's study of the political opportunities of immigrant associations in Italy, i.e. too strong a dependence on the municipal and governmental policies can also crowd out immigrant associations and their specific interest (Caponio 2005).

Immigrant associations as a research object in the political domain

The political participation of immigrant associations has become a popular topic in particular in countries with a long immigration history. In his study of labour immigrants' political participation in Western Europe, Miller (1981) showed that there are also so called 'extra-electoral' participative ways, which take place in consultative bodies, 'extra-parliamentary avenues (e.g. demonstrations and strikes), consultative venues (e.g. advisory bodies), trade unions, civic associations and in political transnational political practices. These so called 'extra-electoral' participative ways have become a focus of interest among researchers. Several studies focus on immigrant associations' participation in the planning of local residential issues and on their claims making for improving immigrants living and working conditions (Ireland 1994, Bousetta 2000, 2001, Garbaye 2004, Kastoryano [1997], 2002, Odmalm 2005, Però 2007). For example, Bousetta has studied the political mobilisation of Moroccans in Antwerp, Utrecht, Liège and Lille. According to Bousetta the ethnic associations of the Moroccan immigrants play an important role in the formulation of policy topics for their meetings and as providers of access to the

policy-making (Bousetta 2001: 345). Immigrant associations' opportunities to mobilise their ethnic group members have often been explored by applying the political opportunity structure approach. This approach has often been applied in studies focussing on immigrant associations' mobilisation of their ethnic group. In particular, the interest has been on the political practices organised by the immigrant associations (Bousetta 2001, Kriesi & al. 1997:52, Koopmans and Statham 2000, Odmalm 2005). In this study, claims-making has not become a core issue mainly due to the fact that immigrants' share to a bigger extent than in the majority of other European Union members states, rights to social and health care services, employment and also voting rights in municipal elections. The latter is open to a person with residence rights and who has lived in Finland more than two years (L 301/2004).

Another object of political participation has been the voting of ethnic minorities and its connection to their associational life (Fennema and Tillie 1999 a,b, 2001, van Heelsum 2002). In her study of political and civic participation of ethnic minorities (Turks, Surinamese and Moroccans) in Amsterdam, van Heelsum shows how a high voting rate among Turkish immigrants goes in hand with their strong social networks between their numerous associations. In comparison, the voting rate and number of associations were smaller among the Moroccans (van Heelsum 2000:196-197).

Immigrant associations as a research object in cultural and religious domain

The study of immigrant associations in Nordic countries showed that cultural activities are among the most important activity forms (see Mikkelsen 2003). This can partly be explained by members' interest to maintain their ethnic identity and to strengthen it also among other immigrants (see also Vermeulen 2004, Bloemraad 2005). Ethnic activities, including cultural and religious practices are important in particular for immigrant communities representing a different kind of culture than the one of the receiving society (Breton 1964:205).

Religious venues organised by immigrant associations also provide an important bridge between newly arrived immigrants and their ethnic group (Diop 1997, Martikainen 2004, 2006, Shadid and Van Koningsveld 1996). In ethnic communities, religious practices organised by immigrant associations

is an important way to socialize newly arrived immigrants and children presenting the so called 'second generation' in the receiving society (Baumann 2002, Martikainen 2006). Religious associations can also participate in public debates and give voice to the interest of its members.

In this study religious associations are not studied as an own associational type. Instead, religious activities are often mentioned as an important activity form in several associations' mono- and multi-ethnic associations (see also Chapter 5 and 6).

Immigrant associations as a research object in transnational domain

Since global changes immigrants have often firmer contacts to their homeland through networks and activities in comparison to immigrants of the early twentieth century (Glick Schiller and al. 1992:1). Today people have become influenced by the global connections that make possible to have economic, cultural and social connections beyond the local living area (Le Galès 2003:183-194). Intensive global communication increases the interdependency between the local and global actors, and can cause (socioeconomic) migration of individuals (ibid:184). These connections influence our life more or less directly, which in turn increase the globalization of our environment for example in the form of increased transnational entrepreneurship (see also Helander 2004 a). Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt (1999:219) frame transnationalism 'which require regular and sustainable social contacts over time across national borders for their implementation'. Transnationalism is produced and maintained by the so called 'transmigrants', people living between two worlds divided by national boundaries (Glick Schiller and al. 1992:1).

In the 1990s Glick Schiller and al. argued that transnationalism is a 'product' of global capitalism and should be perceived as an alternative to assimilation, due to immigrants' transnational contacts between their previous homeland and the receiving society (Glick Schiller and al. 1992:8). Kivisto has criticized Glick Schiller and al. for not taking account how capitalism has influenced the lives of previous and present immigrants: Before there were signs of resistance of capitalism in form of socialist and communism, but today the immigrants look for the most advantageous options, such as transnational

entrepreneurship (Kivisto 2001:555). Furthermore, Kivisto criticizes Glick Schiller and al. for not taking into account the transnational contacts, which were maintained by immigrants in the early twentieth century (ibid). Kivisto argues that transnationalism could be seen rather as an alternative form of assimilation than a subset from assimilation theory by reasoning: 'This is because at the moment that transnational immigrants are working to maintain homeland connections, they are also engaged in the process of acculturating to the host society' (ibid:571). Kivisto's argument is also interesting for this study. In Chapter 5 and 6 I will discuss the importance of transnational activities organised by immigrant associations and their influence on immigrants' inclusion into Finnish society.

Several immigrant associations aim to maintain and strengthen the ethnic identity through transnational activities to the homeland. The transnational activities refer to practices requiring intensive exchange, cross-border travel and permanent contacts (Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt 1999:219). Above all, sustainable contacts between the immigrant country and the country of origin make the transnational activities different from other kinds of activities (see also ibid).

The transnational activities are often important for refugees living in a diaspora, such as the Kurds and Somalis (Griffiths 2005, Wahlbeck 1999). Wahlbeck (1999), who has studied Kurdish diaspora living in Finland and the United Kingdom, argues that immigrant associations can work as important bridge builders between their ethnic group and other ethnic group members living in diaspora. Transnational political activities can provide a way of strengthening the ethnic identity of immigrants, such as the second generation youth, who do not find their place in the receiving society (Baillet 2000:64). Furthermore, some of the activities organised by immigrant associations can have the goal of improving the development activities in the country of origin (Ouali 2004, Lacroix 2005 a,b).

2.4 Establishment of Immigrant Associations in Europe

The settlement of immigrant groups and their organisation in their receiving country is connected to the timing of migration flows and to the migration

policy of the receiving countries (Baumann 2002, Layton-Henry 1990). For example, there are several common features in the associational typology in European countries with labour migration history. Countries, such as France, Germany, the UK and the Netherlands as well as Sweden have had a strong increase of immigrants in the 1950s and 1960s due to expanding industrialisation. In comparison, Spain, Italy and Finland (among others) have been known as emigration countries during the same time period. The level of inclusion into the receiving society among immigrants does not only depend on the time in migration process but also on governance of migration and on immigrants own interests to participate in it (Fennema and Tilly 2004).

Table 2.4 illustrates an ideal model of the establishment of immigrant associations, type of activities and participation of immigrants in their receiving country as well as their maintenance of contacts to the country of origin. The first and second phases of migration have been previously described by Layton-Henry (1990), whereas phases of association and the third phase of migration have been added by the author.

Table 2.4 Associational activities directed towards the country of origin and the receiving country

Phase of migration	Phase of association
<i>1st phase of migration: Arrival</i>	<i>1st phase of association</i>
Character: Recent immigration, looking for social contacts, temporary job, house, etc	Establishment of informal networks and associations with the goal of improving living conditions in the country of origin. Interest to organise religious activities for their own ethnic community
<i>2nd phase of migration: Socio-economic inclusion</i>	<i>2nd phase of association:</i>
Character: more stable social networks, familiar living area.	Establishment of associations with the goal of improving living conditions of immigrants in the receiving society. More established transnational activities with the country of origin, e.g. transnational development projects and organisation of religious practices in the receiving society
<i>3rd phase of migration: Socio-economic inclusion and maintenance of ethnic identity</i>	<i>3rd phase of association</i>
Character: Looking for stable job, differences between 1 st and 2 nd generation immigrants living in one household	Establishment of associations with the goal of improving inclusion of the second generation immigrants (children and youths) to the receiving society. Increased interest in political participation in the receiving country. Focus is more on local living area than on the country of origin

The *first phase of migration* consists of the first years in the receiving country and is characterised by the interest of the first generation immigrants to maintain close contact with the country of origin. This phase is also known as temporary labour recruitment (Layton-Henry 1990). Particularly during the first phase of migration, the collective activities organised by the immigrant associations can indirectly have a mobilising effect on the immigrant (or ethnic) group. For example, Italian and Moroccan migrant workers in France, who often lived together, have focused their collective actions on improvement of migrant workers rights and on equal citizenship (Layton-Henry 1990, Ireland 1994, Rex 1994, Soysal 1994). Rex illustrates the situation by stating:

Ethnic mobilization and the maintenance of separate ethnic identity and organisation could, of course, mean some tendency to withdrawal or secession from the society of settlement. It could also, in principle, involve the notion of ethnic revolution. What we should notice here, however, is that such mobilization is not incompatible with the idea of equal citizenship of all individuals in a multicultural society. In fact one of the goals of ethnic mobilisation is the precisely the achievement of this kind of equal citizenship and it may be that ethnically mobilised groups will act together to achieve such an end both with other ethnic groups in a similar position and with indigenous peers.

Rex (1994:15).

In the beginning the immigrants also focus their associational activities towards the country of origin. Through their associational activities, such as religion, common language and exchange of news from the homeland, the immigrants can strengthen their collective ethnic identity (Rex 1987).

The second phase of migration can be described as the time of mediating and claims making (Layton-Henry 1990:102). This has partly to do with family reunification and the importance of education and the mother tongue. At this stage immigrants have become more aware of their rights (and lack of them). For example in France, the immigrant associations established by Moroccans since the 1980s and other immigrant groups from Africa have actively taken part in the improvement of their living conditions in the local living area (Wihtol de Wenden and Leveau 2001) . The associations

and informal networks can work as an important mediator between local authorities and the immigrant groups. The third phase of migration can be characterised by integrative aims. The more permanent form of inclusion of immigrants into the receiving society depends both on the integration policy of the receiving society and of the interest expressed by immigrants themselves (see also Chapter 6.4 and 7.5). I avoid talking about any fixed form of inclusion due its connection to the immigrants' life situation, which guides their motives of inclusion and also by the existing integrative designs of the receiving society.

Since the beginning of the twenty first century, Finnish local authorities have started to negotiate with immigrant associations about possible service provision by immigrant associations (Saksela 2005, see also Martín Pérez 2003, 2004). This has been a visible part of activities in countries where catholic NGOs, such as Caritas has had an important place in organising educational and social activities for (illegal) immigrants and refugees (Saksela 1999). For example, in Spain the first kind of contracting out of social services to (immigrant) associations took place already in 1991 and was followed by the creation of advisory bodies (Però 2007:276, Morén-Algret 2001).

The increasing number of second generation immigrants has raised both the voices of parents and youth to improve the participation of youth and children in civil society. Immigrant associations can provide a social space for immigrant youth looking for their place between their parents' culture and Finnish society. In particular, bigger immigrant (and refugee) groups, such as Russian speakers and Somalis have started to establish associations focussing on their youth (see also Chapter 6). Another important group looking for its voice to be heard are immigrant women. In France, several immigrant women's associations and networks or the so called "femme relais" have been established by African women with the goal of improving the participation of women in civil society and local policy making (Nantois 1997, Melisse 2003, Quiminal et al. 1995, Quiminal and Timera 2002). Similar forms of activities are also common in other immigrant women's associations (Sudbury, 1998, 2001 and Chapter 6 in this study).

Baumann (2002) has made a similar distinction between five phases of diaspora in his study of Hindu religious traditions in their settlement in Europe.

In comparison with Layton-Henry's (1990) and my model of settlement phases, the one from Baumann differs by making a distinction between the first 'arrival' and the second 'socio-economic' phases. In Baumann's second phase, immigrants aim to strengthen their religious ties with their countries of origin, for example by inviting religious authorities (Baumann 2002:103). I have not made this kind of distinction due to the fact that the significance of religious practices has not been highlighted from other kinds of practices by immigrant associations. Baumann's third phase is characterised by socio-political participation. I prefer to talk about socio-economic participation because of the low political interest expressed by the immigrant associations (Saksela 2003).

Baumann's fourth phase focuses on the importance of religious places, such as a Hindu temples, which becomes 'a socio-cultural area for meeting fellow-Hindis' and a place for 'creating a sense of collective solidarity' (Baumann 2002:106). Immigrants' reactions towards the integration policy of the receiving country depends on the extent of the opportunities they have been offered, which is also reflected in Baumann's fifth and final phase of migration. In Baumann's fifth phase, the immigrants become adapted to the receiving society's socio-economic and political system, but keep their religious practices separated from the ones of the receiving society. According to Baumann, the fourth and fifth level has only partially been reached in Europe (ibid 2002:108). The maintenance of ethnic identity and the interest in becoming adapted to the receiving society is expressed in my third phase as the immigrants' attempt for stronger inclusion into the receiving society and with their focus on the maintenance of ethnic identity among the second generation.

2.5 Civil Society and the Sphere of Interaction

Since the time of Tocqueville, scholars have argued that civil society can strengthen the democracy, in particular through active associational life (Tocqueville 1961 [1835/1840], Gundelach and Torpe 1997, Verba, Lehman Schlozman and Brady 1995). In his article: 'Social and Cultural Integration in a Civil Society', Bauböck emphasizes the importance of civil society as the

strength of the receiving society in the integration of immigrants (Bauböck 1996:70, Chapter 4). According to Bauböck 'civil society is that model of modern society which underlies normative theories of liberal democracy' (ibid:70). With liberal democracy he refers to the existing forms of formal equality, which enables the existence of liberty, such as the freedom to choose and to participate in a society. Furthermore, civil society can create hope for solidarity, 'which underpins social integration in open, anonymous and heterogeneous societies' (ibid:70). Bauböck's model can be perceived as the ideal image of a civil society. In reality, the strengthening connection between 'forms of equality' and social integration can remain vague if the majority and minority perceptions of 'equality' do not meet each other.

Today, the definition of civil society has often been differentiated from the economic and state sphere and also outside the sphere of family (Fennema 2004:429). According to Young:

Civil society refers to a third sector of private associations that are relatively autonomous from both state and economy. They are voluntary, in the sense that they are neither mandated nor run by the state institutions, but spring from the everyday lives and activities of communities of interest. The associations of this third sector, moreover, operate not for profit.

Young (2000:158).

Young's description of civil society is suited to describe in particular the voluntary associations' connection to the state in the United States and in several Western European countries. In Finland, many voluntary associations are partly depended on state subsidies and cannot be separated as clearly from the state as in the example above.

Voluntary associations and networks are in the core position in civil society by forming 'the organizational substratum of the general public of citizens' (Habermas 2004: 367). Still, it should not be taken for granted that civil society would be morally better than some other parts of society, e.g. its political or economic sphere (Ilmonen 2007:12). The elements for constructive democratic life, such as voluntary associations can also be used against itself, by applying them for the interest of the individuals or groups, whose ideology is controversial for democracy. The bound that keeps the group member together

is established on a form of solidarity that may be described as conventional or reflexive depending of the ideology of the type of group (Gundelach and Torpe 1997:48-49). Conventional solidarity is based on a strong “we” vision: common values and struggles where also ethical and ethnic values are shared. Instead the reflexive solidarity can be described as ‘generalised reciprocity’ that is based on difference and mutual trust. For example only the latter form of solidarity can be kept together by a democratic nation that consists of citizens is with diverse form of interests and values (ibid). Both form of solidarity can strengthen the collective identity of members of an association or a network. In the good sense the associations can strengthen the democratic process by encouraging citizens to participate actively in civil society. A lack of solidarity can take place in the form of political powerlessness, when the leader of an ethnic association gives precedence to the political interest of the majority population instead of the political interest expressed by his association (Martiniello 1993, 1997). The importance of gaining access to cooperation in civil society is unquestionable in particular for groups who are marginalised from society. It can be assumed, that immigrant associations which have a strong conventional solidarity and a trustworthy leader who possesses good contacts with civil servants can influence the planning and policy-making in civil society. According to Young:

Civil society enables the emergence of public spheres in which differentiated social sectors express their experience and formulate their opinions. Perhaps, even more importantly, the public sphere enables citizens to expose injustice in state and economic power and make the exercise of power more accountable. Through public discussion and agitation, moreover, citizens can and sometimes do influence the politics of state or corporate institutions or catalyse practical changes within civil society itself.

Young (2000:155)

Finnish voluntary associations

Since nation-building, the Finnish state has had a close connection with voluntary associations, including trade unions, which have played an important role in the creation of civic interests and knowledge at state level (Kettunen

2001). In Finland, the concept 'civil society' has (had) a political dimension in the ideological discussion illustrated by social movements and by an active associational life (Alapuro and Stenius 1987, Helander 1998).

The establishment of formal associations is connected with the mobilisation of Finns from the time of the autonomous Grand Duchy under the Russian empire to independence (1880-1917) and with the cycle of movements at the beginning of the 20th century. In the 19th century the expansion of associational life was not seen as a radical outcome of events but more as natural part of the creation of democracy (Stenius 1987). The time of independence and the creation of Finnish nationalism is also characterised by collective movements and organisations where both upper and middle class members took part (Alapuro and Stenius 1998:18-19). Social movements, that often have their basis in political and economical changes, play an important role in the establishment of associations. For example, economic crisis can lead to collective organisation in the form of protest movements, where the establishment of an association can be either a side or end product (Siisiäinen 1991). This has also been the case in the early years of Finnish independence. The distinction of an association as ideological or economic was in many cases vague and caused a long discussion on the status and role of an association (Alapuro and Stenius 1987:29). From the creation of the association law in 1918 until now, registration of an association has played an important role in the establishment process. By registration, the association receives its legal and official status and this has been important in the claims-making of interests and in the protection of the rights of its members (Siisiäinen 2003). In comparison to informal groups and networks, associations have more legal power in decision making. The label of an association doesn't only symbolise its official status, but makes the allocation of subsidies and cooperation with authorities possible (ibid).

In the late 20th century associations were characterised by a *new kind of organisation*: old, hierarchical structures are replaced by social and flexible networks where the connections of the members were significant (Siisiäinen 2002a, 2003). Interactive networks in an association allow rapid exchange of information and creation of new contacts beyond national borders. These are also of special importance to immigrant associations. In modern associations,

membership is based more on individual experiences and interests than on collective solidarity. This does not mean that collective solidarity has disappeared from associations, it has just become more member centred. Furthermore, the goals of modern associations have become more separate and specific, such as “extreme sport” or “immigrants women’s” associations (Siisiäinen 2002a). Instead, interest towards politics and ideology has diminished (ibid).

Several of the late 20th century associations focussed their *goals on service production* rather than on ideological goals or on the supervision of the interests of members (Siisiäinen 2002a, Helander 2004b). The latter has been one of the main goals within older associations. The allocation of subsidies is strongly connected to cooperation with official institutions, such as community boards for culture and sport or with Ministry of Education (Saksela 2003:266).

Associations that have been established since the 1990s emphasise the role of *interaction and communication* between members and society (Helander 1988, Siisiäinen 2002a, 2003). New technical innovations in the form of internet and mobile telephone have increased the speed and amount of communication also beyond national borders (Castells 1989, 2004, Hannerz 1996). The associations from the 1990’s are more adapted to global changes than the old ones⁸. The former have their focus on interaction and fluid communication, such as networking and internet connections. Another significant feature of late 20th century associations is the intensified cooperation with local and regional authorities. Creation of contacts with authorities is important in subsidy allocation and in getting support with finding localities (Saksela 2005). In a study done on modern associations in Finland it turned out that associations pay attention particularly to: 1) the sharing of information, 2) spreading information about their own association, 3) organising training courses and 4) the supervision of the interests of members (Siisiäinen 2002a:29, for the study see also Siisiäinen 2002b). It doesn’t mean that the importance of the individual has diminished. On the contrary, the emphasis is more on the social

8 Scholars have paid attention to the global influence of high-technology on our daily living, for example the discussion of “global networks” by Manuel Castells (2004), the “reformation of the state structures” by Immanuel Wallerstein (1980, 2000) or “the formation of transnational capitalist class” described by Leslie Sklair (2001).

contacts of the members⁹. There are signs that members with a position in a community delegation or contacts to it are more easily selected to the board in an association (Helander 2004b:69).

The use of civil society and third sector

In their studies of Finnish voluntary associations scholars have started to use the third sector instead of civil society. The concept of the third sector was initially introduced by Amitai Etzioni in the 1970s. In the 1990s, during the recession the third sector concept gained popularity in the discussion of voluntary associations as social service providers (Helander 1998:52, Siisiäinen 2002a). An association can be categorised to belong to the third sector if it fulfils the following criteria. A third sector association is characterised by its institutional form (e.g. it is registered and has rules for its members), private (based on a number of members), non-profit, autonomic and voluntary (Helander 1998:53). (See also Chapter 3).

In this study, the use of civil society is too broad and does not include the immigrant associations' interaction with civil servants. The third sector, in turn refers only to associations and leaves immigrant groups and civil servants outside. Therefore, I make a distinction between civil servants and immigrant associations by naming the former as 'institutional actors' and the latter as 'grassroots actors'. Additional grassroots actors are Finnish voluntary associations, ethnic groups and communities of the immigrants.

The Figure 2.5 shows the key actors of this study and how they interact with each other. The grassroots level actors are studied in the exploration of the Research Questions 1 and 2, whereas the institutional actors are studied in the analysis of the Research Questions 3 and 4. Finally, the core questions of this study, Research questions 5 and 6 are studied with the help of features of interaction.

9 For further reading on human capital see Bourdieu and Passeron (1977), and on social capital Coleman (1988), Putman (1993). Social capital consisting of relationships and social networks also play an important role among the transnational activities organised by immigrants and their associations (Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993, Guarnizo and Díaz 1999).

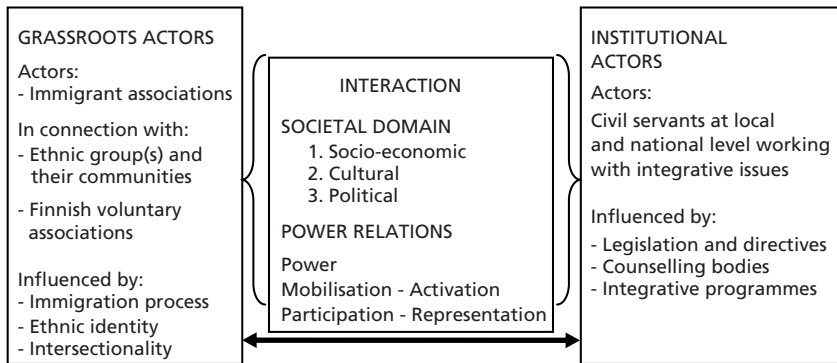


Figure 2.5 Interaction between grassroots actors and institutional actors

2.6 Grassroots Actors

Research Questions 1 and 2 focuses on the grassroots actors consisting of immigrant associations and Finnish voluntary associations (see Figure 2.5). The first question studies the structure and function of immigrant associations. The second question focuses on the immigrant associations' efforts to mobilise their ethnic group members and to strengthen their identity, which is analysed by their external and internal relations. Additionally, these questions study also relations between immigrant associations and Finnish voluntary associations. The importance and function of the above mentioned relations can be better understood by becoming familiar with features connected to immigrant associations, such as their nature and the ethnic characteristics of the members. In addition, features related to the immigration process itself can be found in immigrants' associational life (see also Jenkins 1988: 3).

The division of immigrant associations

The immigrant associations discussed in this study refer to voluntary associations which have been established by immigrants and where the majority of the population have a foreign background. It would be more correct to talk about an 'ethnic agency' if an immigrant association would mainly consist of an organisation, (with paid employees), which provides service programmes for its own ethnic group with 'a consciousness of ethnic identity' amongst other (Jenkins 1994:10). In practice this is seldom the case;

ethnicity is often an important component of the ideology and in the creation of an association, but it should not be seen as the most dominant feature. Other significant features have to be taken into account, such as integrative activities that attempt to include the immigrants into the receiving society. In practice the reason to establish and maintain an association is often a combination of diverse kinds of interests and needs (see also Chapter 5 and 6). The reason for using ‘immigrant association’ instead of ‘ethnic association’ enables a distinction between national ethnic minority associations established by e.g. the Sàmi and the Roma people. Furthermore, the use of immigrant association has mainly to do with the fact that immigrants, including the ones with refugee backgrounds, use the collective term ‘immigrant’ instead of ‘ethnic’ or ‘refugee’ association even if ethnicity is often emphasised in the association’s name. The immigrant association concept is also used among local authorities and other civil servants working with immigration issues. The choice of ‘immigrant’ instead of ‘ethnic’ goes also in line with Pyykkönen’s definition, who has explored immigrant associations in the Tampere and Jyväskylä region (see Pyykkönen 2007b). Nevertheless, several of the immigrant associations do emphasise that their activities aim to strengthen their *ethnic*¹⁰ identity through cultural activities beyond other activities, such as social services, sports, political interests etc.

I have aimed to clarify the nature of immigrant associations by dividing the immigrant associations either into ‘mono-’ or ‘multi-ethnic’ immigrant associations. Mono-ethnic associations represent only one ethnic group, while multi-ethnic consists of different kinds of ethnic backgrounds. I prefer to talk about multi-ethnic immigrant associations instead of multicultural immigrant associations. This kind of division enables us to see the difference between multi-ethnic immigrant associations and Finnish voluntary associations calling themselves multicultural associations and having natives as their members. (These associations are often also established by natives and supported by the municipalities, such as the *International Cultural Centre – Caisa*.) Instead, immigrant associations can be placed into certain typology based on their

10 The concept ‘ethnic’ outlines a group’s cultural character, whereas ‘ethnicity’ describes the social construction of a group and its differentiation from other groups (see e.g. Barth 1963, Banton 1967).

goals or interests. A typological division helps to get an idea of the level of inclusion of immigrant associations into Finnish society. I will divide the associations into four types: 1. societal, 2. ethno-cultural, 3. integrative and 4. transnational. Typological division is useful in the exploration of immigrant associations' mobilisation of their ethnic group members and in the analysis of immigrant associations' opportunities to participate and represent their members in Finnish society. Chapters 5 and 6 explore the function and meaning of this typology.

Features influencing the immigrant associations

During the migration process, the immigrants become more aware of their *ethnic identity*, which is characterised by the following elements: 1) Self identification (or identity), 2) origin of the group, 3) specific cultural characters, such as language and of 4) social organisation (including norms and rules of suitable behaviour) (Allardt and Stark 1981:43-45, see also Barth (ed. 1969). Interest in organising collective activities, both formal and informal is often an outcome of self identification of the immigrant during the migration process. It is within this context immigrants become more collectively organised, aware of their needs and interests and establish associations amongst themselves (Basch 1987, Breton 1964, Rex 1987). Naturally, persons who have been persecuted for ethnic reasons in their home country are aware of their ethnicity before entering the receiving society.

Migration researchers have started to emphasise other features related to identity, such as how time and space are connected with class and gender (Anthias 2002, 2009, Yval-Davis, Anthias ja Kofman 2005). Anthias argues '[i]n addition, it is important to consider the spatial, political and economic location as contextual and temporal, and its influence on forms of negotiation, incorporation and exclusion' (Anthias 2009:7). Some of the immigrants aim to compensate the geographical distance and cultural differences with strong contacts to their country of origin in the form of transnational activities. In other words, the immigrants live their daily life between two worlds, in a kind of 'bifocality' (the place of origin and the country of settlement) (Vertovec 2004:974). Immigrant associations can also strengthen the importance of transnational activities in immigrant communities by having enduring contacts

to their home village, such as maintenance of orphan houses, organisation of educational courses for women etc. (See also Chapter 6). The importance of lived experiences is influenced by the settlement time in the receiving country and with the above mentioned cultural differences and geographical distance. In this study, I have paid attention to the cultural background of immigrants and to their migration process. For example, I asked about the interviewees' previous participation in a voluntary association in their homeland and of their experiences of the migration process (from decision making to the settlement stage). Beyond, immigrants' experiences from their migration process I have also paid attention to time of settlement, different needs and interest related to gender, education and age.

Far too often, organisations and institutions are taken as "gender neutral"; this is based on our assumption that the "male" is a universal concept (Harzig 2003: 50). I have tried to avoid the problem by specifically paying attention to the gender dimension in the analysis of the immigrant women's associations, as well as in the three other research contexts. In studies of immigrant women, gender is often connected with two other significant features, namely 'ethnicity' and 'class'. These three concepts can together provide an intersectional perspective: gender differences in associational life give an additional dimension to the more familiar definition of 'cultural identity'. The latter refers to an illusion of one shared culture among members of one ethnic or national group (Hall 2002: 45-56). In other words, the image of 'one shared culture' can differ between women and men from an ethnic group.

The difference between immigration and refugee background has been highlighted only if it has been of importance for the establishment and maintenance of the association according to the interviewees. Other aspects that have guided the analysis of the association have been the cultural and geographic distance. For example, the establishment of an association and finding financing and premises have been somewhat less complicated for the Russian speaking and Ingrian associations than for immigrant associations established by immigrants from Somalia and Arabic countries.

2.7 Institutional Actors

The immigrant associations' opportunities to act in Finnish society depend not only on their own motivation and socio-political background, but are also influenced by the norms and laws of the host society and how successfully these are applied by civil servants (Zincone and Caponio 2006: 279-280). For example, access to councils and good communication can make immigrants more aware of their role of active citizens (Cornwall and Coelho 2007:6, Van Der Waladt 2007:26). Decision-makers can become aware of the concerns of immigrants if they can participate in local governance and represent their concerns and interest. The institutional design consisting of governmental institutions, actors and legislation guides the immigrant (associations') opportunities to participate and represent in Finnish civil society.

2.7.1 Integration policy and actors working with it

Since joining the EU, the Finnish state has taken several measures to ease the integration of immigrants into Finnish society. In this sub chapter the focus is on the integration policy from 1990s to the beginning of 2000, i.e. from the time period when immigration increased until the time period when immigrants started to establish their associations.

Until the end of 2007, the *Ministry of Labour* had the biggest responsibility in the integration of immigrants and refugees. It was in-charge of immigration policy and mechanisms, such as legislation, implementation of directives and guidance in the labour market. In addition, the Ministry of Labour was the main institutional actor in the integration of immigrants into civil society. Beyond the tasks regarding immigration the ministry was also involved with the reception of refugees and asylum seekers and the prevention of ethnic discrimination, racism and intolerance. Other key actors in the management of foreign policy in general were *Ministry of the Interior* and *Ministry of Education*. The former was in charge of the co-ordination of EU-issues and of residence permits. The Ministry of the Interior also hosted the *Directorate of Immigration*, which took (and still takes) care of asylum affairs, deportations, resident permits and coordinates the tasks of the police force and the frontier

guard. The *Ministry of Education* was in charge of the educational and cultural services for immigrants. Social and health issues were co-ordinated by the *Ministry of Social Affairs and Health*, while the *Ministry of Foreign Affairs* coordinated the international cooperation, international agreements and visa affairs. The *Ministry of Justice* was responsible for the legislative issues, such as legal protection and actions against discrimination. (For the administration of migration affairs in Finland until the end of 2007 see Appendix 1). The organisational structure of the management of immigration politics changed at the beginning of 2008. The former role of the Ministry of Labour has been replaced by the *Ministry of the Interior* and the *Ministry of Employment and the Economy*. Issues related to migration policy are mainly coordinated by the Ministry of the Interior which is in charge of tasks concerning immigration policy, internal protection and of the integration of immigrants. The last part is coordinated by the Finnish Immigration Service (or the former Directorate of Immigration).

During the last few decades the civic and political rights of foreigners have been improved. Since the revision of the association law it has been possible for foreigners to establish associations and to participate in political parties with the precondition that they are permanently settled in Finland (L 503/1989).

The legislative measures which have given more possibilities for immigrants (including refugees) includes the reform of the *Aliens Act* and the *Act for integration of immigrants and reception of asylum seekers* (L 493/1999). Since the beginning of the 1990s when the number of immigrants started to increase, the old Aliens Act was replaced by a reformed one which came into force in 1991. This act was criticised as being unclear and not in consensus with the other Finnish legislation, such as family reunification. Therefore another reform was needed and in 2004 a new Aliens Act came into force. The Aliens Act outlines the rules for long term residence of foreigners in Finland. Foreigners can apply for a permanent residence after a temporary residence permit of two consecutive years. The residence permit is important since it gives access to Finnish social security and permits foreigners to vote in local politics. Social benefits and social services are based on residency and not citizenship. Therefore, the lack of Finnish citizenship does not exclude foreigners from

civic participation as in some other countries, such as France. Citizenship as such, has not become a topic for immigrants' claims making in Finland. In comparison to other Western European studies of immigrant associations, this study does not focus in particular on the importance of citizenship basically because being a non-citizen doesn't hinder the establishment of an association, organising societal activities or voting in local elections. Instead, the fact of being 'a foreigner' or 'a return migrant' may have more practical hindrances for the immigrants' participation in Finnish society in the form of a lack of knowledge about Finland's public and health service or finding access to the labour market.

The need for an integration act became apparent after the establishment of a committee for refugee and immigration affairs in 1995. It was on the basis of their report that a programme for immigration and refugee affairs was established in 1997. The Act on the *Integration of Immigrants and reception of Asylum Seekers* (L 493/1999) came into force in 1999. The objective of the law was to draw attention to immigration and refugee policy and to integration issues. (Selonteko kotouttamislain 2002:1). In collaboration with *Employment and Economic Development Centre* (Uudenmaan Työ ja Elinvoima keskus) and the *Social Insurance Institution* (KELA), local authorities drew up an integration programme based on the integration law. In the law, the division of immigration tasks between municipalities and the state were partly reorganised. The most significant division concerns the employment tasks which were taken charge by the Ministry of Labour and tasks going beyond labour issues were mainly adopted by the local authorities in the municipalities.

This legal interpretation of integration, which is used by authorities, underlines the importance of an individual integration plan for three years organised by the 'Employment and Economic Development Centre' for refugees and unemployed immigrants. Local authorities design the individual plan together with the immigrants and refugees objectives, measures, resources as well as forms of collaboration.

2.7.2 Development Programmes of Immigration Policies in the Helsinki Metropolitan area

At the beginning of the 1990s the municipalities in the Helsinki Metropolitan area started to plan a common development programme. It focused on: 1) the language programmes in the schools, 2) the needs of children coming from language and cultural minority groups and 3) the need and importance of international schools. This programme also included a clearer sharing of tasks related to immigration and refugee issues. The working group for the planning of the development of services for foreigners continued to meet regularly. By the end of the 1990s, the working group introduced three core issues of which two related to immigration, namely: 'the development of a multicultural programme' in the Helsinki Metropolitan area and 'the development programme for ethnic entrepreneurship' (Joronen 2005:58). The main results of the former programme were the teaching of counsellors of residents and supporting immigrant youth who had learning difficulties in the school. Another initiative by the municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan area was a so called "regional multicultural information centre" or *Selma* (Seudullinen monikulttuurinen tietopalvelukeskus Selma). Selma was launched at the beginning of year 2002. The aim of the centre is to improve the exchange of information between the local authorities working with immigrants. The focus is mainly on seminars and courses related to education, the sharing of information and guiding immigrants into the labour market (see also Selma).

According to Joronen and Saukkonen, the mentioning of the multicultural issue within the context of immigration has been almost non-existent in all Helsinki Metropolitan area development strategy programmes in the mid of the current decade. Nevertheless, all municipalities in the Helsinki Metropolitan area do mention the need to support meeting places for immigrants and the majority population, the support of immigrant and multicultural associations and also the need to take into the consideration the foreign languages spoken by immigrants in the provision of material to libraries, and finally the employment of immigrants in counselling and information services. (Saukkonen, Ruusuvirta and Joronen 2007: 28).

Several integrative programmes have been organised by the support of the *European Social Fund – ESF*, which is one of the European Union’s Structural Funds. Its aim is to strengthen the member states’ opportunities to organise better job prospects and well-being of their citizens (see also ESF). By the end of the 1990s, all larger Helsinki Metropolitan area municipalities, organised with the support of the ESF, programmes for immigrants employment. In Helsinki, SISU Integra (1998-2001) focused on the employment of immigrants and creating so called “ethno-specific” spheres where the skills of ethnic minorities can be improved. This included also one mono-ethnic immigrant association and one multicultural association (see also SISU Integra). In 1998-2001 there were projects that aimed to empower long term unemployed youth, including immigrants (see for example Työllisyyspolku projekti). In 1998-2001 the municipality of Vantaa organised together with The Ministry of Labour, a project aimed at Ingrian return migrants from the former Soviet Union (Paluumuuttajien kotoutuminen Vantaalle -PAMU). This was partly financed by the ESF (see also PAMU).

2.8 Interaction Level

In this study, interaction between immigrant associations and local authorities is described as a relation, which is characterised by the active and equal participation of both partners. To what extent the equal participation takes place will be explored later on in this study (see Chapter 7). The interaction level has two interconnected features, which guide the interest and possibilities of immigrant associations in the societal integration of immigrants into Finnish society (see also Figure 2.5):

- The societal domain
- Power relations

2.8.1 The societal sub-domains: Socio-economic, Cultural and Political

The interaction which takes place between immigrant associations, civil servants and other voluntary associations can be defined as a societal domain,

which is divided into three sub domains: cultural, socio-economic and political where immigrants can at least partly participate.

The *socio-economic domain* comprises of the national social welfare rights and rights to work (Castles and Davidson 2000:110-111). This domain includes activities focusing on empowerment of immigrants and refugees, such as their education and access to the labour market. In addition, the social service and health issues belong in this arena. This includes cooperation between immigrant associations and local authorities working with social and health issues as well as with integrative issues. Labour issues are taken up in the form of activities and projects organised by the authorities either for or with immigrant associations.

The *political domain* refers to the opportunities of immigrant associations to act and to influence in the official bodies (Entzinger and Biezeveld 2003:13). This domain consists of interaction between immigrant associations and local and national policy-making bodies, such as advisory boards and delegations. Additionally, this domain also includes political activities organised by immigrant associations, such as the organisation of demonstrations and support of homeland politics, etc. This study does not include voting and participation of immigrants in local elections because it does not relate to associational activities among immigrants. In this context it can be stated that the political participation of immigrants in local elections is still fairly modest. This has partly to do with the scattered ethnic population in Finland.

In this study, the *cultural domain* consists of cultural institutions, organisations and voluntary associations collaborating with immigrant associations. Religious activities are also included in the cultural arena due to the fact that this study does not focus separately on religious associations. The problem with this domain is its framing. In other words, if it refers to several cultural models living in harmony, such as the aim of the 'multicultural model' as described, or if it refers to assimilation, where immigrants adopt the culture of the receiving society without maintenance of their own culture (Entzinger and Biezeveld 2003:14).

2.8.2 Power relations

The exploration of the organisational process of immigrant associations is not only about the immigrants' organisation into an association. The focus is also on efforts of the immigrant associations to mobilise ethnic group members and the associations' access to civil society. Even if immigrant associations would get access to civil society it does not mean that these associations have equal opportunities to presence or to influence (see also Gaventa 2006).

Power

The immigrant associations' opportunities to be present and to have a voice in participative spheres depend on the how and by whom power is channelled in the society. The power concept is used mainly for the analysis of interaction between immigrant associations and its institutional partners. I argue that interaction includes a dimension of power, which is not necessarily defined as a 'power relation'. Instead, reactive (passive relation) and ignorance can be used to describe the interaction (or relation) between immigrant associations and the partners depending on the situation.

The reason for the above mentioned argument is that a power relation between actors is not always evident. Bachrach and Baratz (1970:24) stress 'a power relation exists when (a) there is a conflict over values or course of action between A and B; (b) B complies with A's wishes; and (c) B does not so because he is fearful that A will deprive him of value or values which he regards more highly than those which would have been achieved by noncomplicance'. The above mentioned description of power is useful in this study together with Lukes second dimension of power. The latter consists of both overt and covert forms of conflict which is often maintained by powerful people. In other words, the focus is on existing and potential issues and on decision making as well as on non decision making such as decision making and control over the political agenda. This form of power also includes potential issues, observable and latent conflict. (Lukes 2005:16-29).

In this study, forms of power relations are mainly discussed in the context of immigrant associations' ability to get access and to be present in planning and decision making bodies, such as advisory boards. Additionally

the exploration of power relations is discussed in the cooperation between immigrant associations and local authorities. The institutional actors have also a powerful role in the governance of subsidies. Power relations are not subject of deeper investigation in this study as the agenda setting often is clearly set from above.

Mobilisation from below

The power of immigrant associations to 'activate' the members of their ethnic group is referred in this study as 'mobilization'. In this study, it is more correct to talk about ethnic mobilisation, which refers to an immigrant group's collective interest in identifying itself by collective values and common features, such as language, norms and symbolic values, and in certain cases by territory (Olzak 1983). In other words, this kind of collective identification is something that immigrants bring with them from their country of origin. Sometimes the motives for mobilisation can have their origin in internal differences of an immigrant group. For example, immigrants living in Finland do not represent a homogenised group; quite the opposite in fact. The immigrant groups are fairly small and represent different ethnic interests and language groups.

The ethnic mobilisation process can take place when an association manages to activate their members either in the form of participation in activities or in the form of representation in a public forum (such as counselling bodies). The latter can improve their members' opportunities to reach their interest or to fulfil their needs. The mobilising activities organised by the associations for their members can be described as 'social', 'supportive', 'counselling' and/or 'intermediating'. For example, the intermediating role of immigrant associations as bridge builders between immigrants and municipalities may also strengthen immigrants' social and political participation in the receiving society (see also Fennema and Tillie 2001, 1999, Berger, Galonska and Koopmans 2004). Furthermore, for many immigrants, participation in associational activities has given them an opportunity to express the needs and interests of their ethnic group (Pyykkönen 2007b, Winborg 1999, Vermeulen 2005, Wihtol de Wenden and Leveau 2001)).

Activation from above

To what extent the civil servants can activate immigrants to participate in integrative activities depends also on the governmental actors' capacity to take into consideration the interest and motives of the immigrants. The concept 'empowerment' has been frequently used in integrative and multicultural programmes with the focus on strengthening the participation of a person in the society. Still, it is not evident that the people who ought to be 'empowered' find the means to achieve participation as proper. According to Toivanen (forthcoming), the only constructive way to achieve 'effective participation' is to include the members of minority group into the discussion and in the contextualisation of concepts, such as societal integration. The activating initiatives and restrictions are discussed in Chapter 7.

Advisory boards and delegations are important official bodies where immigrant associations and their groups can be invited to take part. For example, bigger municipalities have local advisory boards for foreigners in Espoo, Vantaa and Helsinki and at national level there is the *National Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations – ETNO*. For the indigenous groups, such as Sámi in Finnish Lapland is *The Advisory Board on Sámi Affairs (Sámiáššiid ráðđádallangoddi)* represents the interests of the Sámi in Finland and a *Delegation for Sámi Affairs*, which belongs to the Ministry of Justice). The Roma are another ethnic minority group which also has its own advisory board called the *Advisory Board on Romani Affairs* (RONK).

Participation

Voluntary associations are familiar for their role as democratic venues for citizens to have influence on and to participate in the planning and decision making process in civil society (Almond and Verba 1963, Tocqueville 1990 [1840], van Deth 1997). Immigrant associations can also work as inclusive venues for an immigrant into Finnish (civil) society. The capacity of immigrant associations to include the members of their ethnic groups into Finnish civil society depends partly on the immigrants own motives to participate and on the institutional actors' prescribed conditions.

Effective participation depends partly on members' motives for civic engagement. In other words; what are the motives for participation according

to the immigrants, e.g. if it means to be heard by civil servants, to act together with civil servants or to make civil servants more responsible for their work (relating to immigrant issues) (Cornwall and Coelho 2007:9)? Furthermore, effective participation depends also on how reciprocal the interaction between grassroots actors and institutional actors is in reality (Mahmud 2007:64-68). Participation is not necessarily efficient if only one of the actors, e.g. immigrant associations, is active and the others, e.g. civil servants remain passive.

Chapter 6 discusses how immigrant associations mobilise their ethnic group members to participate in the Finnish socio-economic domain or include the immigrants in their own ethnic group. In Chapter 7 the focus is on relations between immigrant associations and the institutional actors.

Representation

The inclusion of immigrants into the receiving society does not only depend on their opportunities to participate in it but also on their opportunities to represent, “stand up and get their voice heard” in the society (Young 2000). Equal representation of citizens is an important part of the democratisation process. Representation refers in this study to the rights of immigrant associations to represent their members’ interests and to members’ (physical) presence in decision making bodies. The extension and way of representation of a minority group depends on repressive and facilitating mechanisms that the majority group uses. Immigrant associations’ opportunities to represent their interest depend on who has the access to represent and also of the role of immigrant associations as access providers to the decision making arena (Cornwall and Coelho 2007:6). It should be noticed that in the policy-making ‘the relationship between representation and real distribution, between political participation and effective power’ is not always clearly defined (Vertovec 1999:27, Saksela 2005). The Chapters 6 and 7 will discuss the immigrant associations’ representation in Finnish society, such as the associations’ participation and representation in municipality projects organised for immigrants and refugees; in seminars and other kinds of events organised by civil servants.

2.9 Summary

Since the number of immigrants in Finland is growing, scholars have started to study the organisation of immigrants into associations and networks. Immigrants as well as non-citizens who have received the citizenship of its host country, can influence the advancement of a democratic society by participation through their associational activities in their ethnic community. Associations can be seen as part of a more powerful movement among its members as the sub chapter on the establishment of voluntary associations showed. Proactive and reactive participation among immigrant associations have had an impact on the improvement of immigrants' living conditions. Immigrant associations have gained in some European states, a more official role as representatives of other immigrant associations or certain immigrant groups. There is still ambiguity at local, national and supranational levels among the decision makers in finding a more equal way to include the immigrants in their receiving country.

The immigrants' associational life in Finland is still a fairly unstudied research area. This chapter started with a literature review of studies on immigrant associations, mainly beyond the Finnish context due to the small numbers of studies conducted in Finland. Subsequently, an outline of the framework where immigrants organise their associational activities and the background factors influencing their existence was presented. This Chapter presented also recent demographic changes in Finland related to immigration. Nevertheless, Finland has had a long history as an emigration country but changed into an immigration country in the late 1980s. This also partly explains the fairly recent establishment of immigrant associations from the mid 1990s. This chapter presented also the grassroots actors, consisting of immigrant associations and Finnish voluntary associations. The institutional actors consist of local authorities. The interaction level consists of features, which are used in the analysis of the relations between immigrant associations and local authorities.

PART II

3 An Outline of Theoretical Approaches

Immigrant associations have been studied in diverse multidisciplinary studies and, therefore, there is no single organisational theory that would be particularly dominant. In an international context there are also difficulties finding a unified theoretical approach which would permit a more profound explanation of the inclusion of immigrant in their receiving society. Scholars usually combine theories which have their origin in a certain scientific discipline. Here, the attempt is to approach the theoretical framework by outlining theories, which support the central theoretical building blocks for this study. The origins of the theoretical framework are theories originating from discussions of *ethnic groups*, *mobilisation* and *institutionalism*. Some elements of these theories can be derived from (or related to) organisational theories. In particular, the latter two theoretical approaches share some similarities with organisational theories, such as new-institutional and organisational culture approaches. Their influence can be seen also in the theoretical framework. This chapter briefly presents how different kinds of organisational theories have developed along the era of industrialisation and globalisation. Some of them have still a strong position in studies of voluntary associations.

This study will apply two theoretical approaches: namely ethnic resource mobilisation and institutional channelling. The former has been influenced by studies of organisational culture and the latter by studies of the new-institutional school. The cultural background of the immigrant groups is visible in the organisation of immigrant groups and in their associational

activities. The management of an association has much to do with the cultural background of the immigrant. In the analysis it is important to compare the composition and management of immigrant associations representing different ethnic groups. I prefer to use the ethnic resource mobilisation view instead of studies of organisational culture, because the latter refers more concretely to internal factors of an association than to the ethnic differences of immigrant groups (see Chapter 5 and 6). The institutional channelling, in its turn, is closely related to new-institutional school. The former can be seen as an “offspring” of the new-institutional school, which focuses on the structural institutional changes, such as institutional convergence. The usefulness of these two theoretical approaches is discussed in more detail in Chapters 6 and 7.

3.1 The Influence of Organisational Theories

Studies of voluntary associations are connected to the organisational theory that has its basis in the time period from the early industrialisation of the 19th-century to the time of post-industrial societies. Several of these theories are today still relevant both in studies of enterprises and voluntary associations. Common for both profit making and non-profit making organisations is the individual behaviour and decision making behind them (Ahrne 1994). Therefore, it is important to explore the connection between the components of an organisation (or, as in this case a voluntary association) and the organisations external relations. The subsequent sub chapter will present some of the core organisational theories and their use in studies of voluntary associations. This will be followed by a separate discussion of studies of immigrant associations.

Organisations as a Research Object

Max Weber and Chester Barnard can be mentioned among the most prominent scholars in the study of organisations. They represented different approaches to organisational life. Weber has given an important sociological contribution by analysing the legitimate authority and the ideal types of organisation. According to him, the sociological structure of an

organisation (such as administration) is based on legal ('best represented by bureaucracy'), traditional (such as 'patriarchal authority') and charismatic authority (based on 'affectual and personal devotion') (Weber 1980:4-8). Weber emphasises the bureaucratic organisation and control of activities that can be achieved by rational performance. In contrast to this structural approach is the psychological approach developed by Barnard. He defines organisation as a 'system of consciously coordinated activities or forces of two or more persons' (Barnard 1980:13). Neither pure sociological nor socio-psychological definitions can explain the complexity of the organisational structure. In modern society the problem is not only to find the best way to achieve efficiency but also to find a way that takes into consideration human behaviour and social features (Etzioni 1964).

Over the decades organisational theory has developed and become of interest especially in the late modern era partly due to the rapid high-technological pressure on organisations. Efficiency in the form of networking and communication has also become a crucial element in voluntary associations, which can be described as organisations with somewhat lighter bureaucracy. Ahrne and Hedström define organisations as 'formal alliances with identifiable individuals'¹¹. They point out that the main difference between institutions and organisations is that the latter can consist of actors and the term 'to organise' signifies 'to act' (Ahrne and Hedström 1999:8-11).

Organisations can be defined as 'social units (or human groupings) deliberately constructed and reconstructed to seek specific goals' Etzioni (1964:3). Common for organisations are that these can be classified by their '*type of goals or function* about which they are organised' (Parsons 1980:116). These goals can be described as the same used in the description of the function of the social system. According to Parsons, organisations can be divided into economic oriented (e.g. business organisations), political organisations (e.g. governmental organs), integrative organisations (e.g. courts, political parties and interest groups focusing on 'adjustment of conflicts' at the societal level) and pattern-maintenance organisations, such as schools and churches

¹¹ Free translation from Ahrne and Hedström (1999:7): --- 'Organisationer är formella sammanslutningar av bestämda identifierbara individer'.

focusing on “cultural” and “expressive” functions. Even family and kinship can be counted within this category as far as they represent our own nuclear family or reference group. (Ibid: 116-117). The differences between organisations and institutions can be differentiated by the formers capability to act with an aim for specific goals and the latter’s representation in the form of social order and norms.

Institution represents a social order or pattern that has attained a certain state or property; institutionalization denotes the process of such attainment. --- institutions are those social patterns that, when chronically reproduced, owe their survival to relatively self-activating social process. Their persistence is not dependent, notably, upon recurrent collective mobilization, mobilization repetitively reengineered and reactivated in order to secure the reproduction of a pattern. That is, institutions are not reproduced by action, in this strict sense of collective intervention in a social convention. Rather, routine reproductive procedures support and sustain the pattern, furthering its reproduction – unless collective action blocks, or environmental shock disrupts, the reproductive process.

Jepperson (1991:145)

In other words, institutions are socially constructed rules or other systems, which frame and guide the actors’ social environment by taken for granted explanations (Jepperson 1991:149) To what extent an object is perceived as an institution depends on the context in which it takes place. For example, rules and acts may appear as institutions to a formal organisation, such as for the Ministry of Education, whereas its practices may appear institutional to a less organised social practice, e.g. meetings organised by advisory boards (Jepperson 1991: 148, March and Simon 1958, see also Powell and DiMaggio 1991). The context of an institution describes how an organisation should look although the definition of an institution is not very strict. An institution exists outside an organisation and can influence the latter by its rules of how an organisation should look (Ahrne 1994:82).

The academic foundation of organisation theory goes back to the 1950s. The first “official” school was the *Carnegie school* established by March and

Simons¹². It focused on the rationality of organisations. Another influential school is the school of *contingency theory* founded in the 1960s. In this school, organisations are perceived as rational solutions to problems that the organisations face in their environment. The focus is on routines and taken for granted features of the organisation. An opposite direction to the contingency theory is the *organisation ecology* with a focus on larger processes of changes over a longer time period. In the mid 1970s the *new- institutional school* was created. Here, the core idea is on the adjustment of organisations in their institutional environment: normative rules will support the legitimate position of the organisation. During the same time period, an interest towards power relations and control grew. An organisational theory school called *labour process theory* was created. It had its basis in Marx's description of surplus and value of labour. At the end of the 1970s, counselling enterprises became interested in *organisational culture* which in turn became another theoretical orientation. The interest to understand organisational structure of different cultural backgrounds has partly to do with increasing global contacts. Therefore the anthropological (see e.g. Geertz 1973) and organisational studies created a productive basis for organisational theory. Also, the *economic organisational theory* with focus on systems of transactions and information flows has been elaborated on by James Coleman and Michel Hechter¹³ amongst others. (Ahrne and Hedström 1999:8-11).

The above mentioned academic directions have also influenced the research of voluntary associations. For example, political scientists focus more on the macro level, such as the participation of associations in political decision making, whereby social scientists explore mainly the micro level, such as the individual interests of members (Helander 1998). Sociologists have their interest often between these two levels in topics, such as structure, function and changes in associations. For that reason, there is not always a clear distinction between the impacts of different schools, such as the new-institutional or organisational ecological school.

12 See also *Organisations* by James G. March and Herbert A. Simon (1958) and *A comparative analysis of complex organizations on power, involvement and their correlates* by Amitai Etzioni, (1961).

13 See also James Coleman's *Foundations of Social Theory* (1990) and his article of *Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital* (1988) and Michel Hechter's *Principles of group solidarity* (1987).

Sociologists and political scientists have been interested in studying the role of voluntary associations in the making of democracy. According to Putnam, a decline of social capital has to do with a decline of voluntary associations and the social capital that these associations bring to the society (Putnam 2000, see also Almond and Verba 1963). This would mean that a majority of the voluntary associations would foster democracy, but is this always the case? For example, cultural recreational associations, such as sport and dog associations do not necessarily strengthen nor weaken the democracy in a society, whereas associations with socio-economic and political goals may play a bigger role in the democratisation process. Nevertheless, associations, such as the ones established by immigrants, can play a significant role in the inclusion or exclusion of immigrants into or from the receiving society by organising associational activities.

3.2 The Influence of Previous Theories

The chronological development of the application of the different kinds of theoretical models and their connection with this study are summarised in Figure 3.2. 'Row 1' shows the significance of ethnic groups, mobilisation and institutionalism in the analysis of the development of further theoretical approaches (see also sub chapter 3.2.1). 'Row 2' is to guide the reader to the current theoretical discussion related to studies of ethnic groups and immigration (see also sub chapter (3.2.2), whereas 'Row 3' introduces the two main theoretical approaches of this study (see also sub chapter 3.2.3).

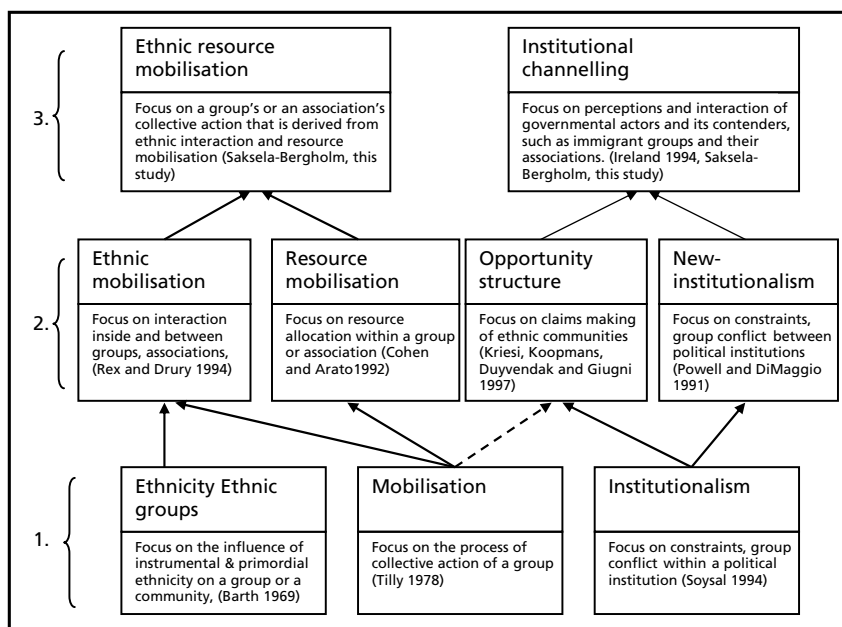


Figure 3.2 A family tree of theories

3.2.1 Ethnic groups, Institutionalism and Mobilisation

In previous studies of immigrant associations, the analysis has often had its origin at least in one of the following three theoretical roots: ethnic groups, institutionalism and mobilisation. The first view starts with the role of ethnic groups in migration process and in particular in studies on ethnic associations. The second view presents a model and elaborates on the discussion of immigrant associations by presenting the role of interest, mobilisation, opportunities and collective action. The third view shows how governmental institutions partly guide its contenders, but is also challenged by them.

Several researchers who study integration of immigrant groups pay attention to the importance of ethnic groups for the immigrants as well as how this is perceived by the natives. The ethnicity has again become a “hot topic” due to ethnic disputes, fears of terrorism and increased immigration. The argument of John Rex is still of interest at the present time:

Ethnicity today is in ill repute. With the collapse of the bi-polar world system after 1989 the various groups, nations and communities which had been held together by the quasi-imperial systems of the superpowers were left to fight for themselves and among themselves. In the name of ethnicity, nationalism or ethnic-nationalism they fought brutally for territory, and the Serbian notion of 'ethnic cleansing' came to provoke something of the horror felt towards the Nazi Holocaust fifty years earlier. Meanwhile, even though they were not engaged in nationalist projects, migrant ethnic minorities became the focus of suspicion and hostility in their countries and settlement.

(Rex, 1997:269)

When we read news of global conflicts and irregular migration we can also notice the increasing need to take into account the dimension of ethnic groups in the discussion of immigration. The conceptualisation of ethnic groups should be framed within the context where the topic of interest takes place. In this study it is relevant to include the significance of collective identity, community organisation and social interaction. These three elements are all common for group formation and can be found in the discussion of 'instrumental' (or situational) ethnicity and 'primordial ethnicity'. In other words, the importance of ethnicity starts from the "boundary making" between groups. Fredrik Barth argues that instrumental ethnicity is about 'defining boundaries for a certain ethnic group or community', but he goes on by calling into question what the criteria are for a group to define its boundaries (Barth 1969). Clifford Geertz (1983), in turn, defines primordiality as a community¹⁴ based on kinship sharing common elements of togetherness and language and belief. More prevalent, in immigration studies, is not the bonding effect as such but more to explore how an immigrant group can transfer and re-create its ethnicity in the receiving society. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to the significant character of ethnicities 'dual nature'. Ethnicity is partly described by the ethnic group itself and at the same

14 This can also be compared with Tönnies definition of community in his work of 'Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft' (1887) (or in English 'Community and Society').

time it is prescribed by the natives in the receiving society. The dual nature of ethnicity takes us to *institutionalism*¹⁵. The concept of institutionalism is broadly used both in the analysis of political as well as state related studies. For an organisational theorist, institutionalism refers to the study of human behaviour and the exploration of organisational landscape and its structures. A sub-division of institutionalism can be called sociological institutionalism. This refers to culturally-specific practices including traditions and symbolism which can be found in some of the cultural practices of an organisation (Hall and Taylor 1996: 946-947). In migration and ethnic studies, Yasmin Soysal's work *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe* (1994) is a good example of how she has applied sociological institutionalism to explain the relationship between culture, norms and cognitive structures which also can be reflected in the behaviour of natives and immigrants.

Institutionalism has also been applied by political scientists in their analysis of opportunities or threats that increase or decrease immigrants' socio-economic resources in their attempt to mobilise their group for political claims making, such as voting, standing as a candidate in local elections or to demonstrate. Governmental parties can work as channels for strengthening or weakening the participation of immigrants in politics (see also Verba, Kim and Nie 1978). On a macro level it is suitable to talk about the governmental institutions which influence both individuals and groups, such as integration politics of immigrants and refugees. It can be stated that international migration flows become more independent from the "pushing" factors and more controlled by "pulling" factors of the receiving countries. Today, immigration policy is top-down guided by actors working at supra-national level, such as the EU and organisational actors including the UN and the OSCE¹⁶ amongst others. At the national level, issues of immigration and refugees are coordinated both by ministries and the government. In the exploration of immigrant groups and their associational participation in the receiving country, the focus is turned from the institutional structure to the

15 Institutionalism refers to a process of maintenance of governmental structures and bodies. These structures can be defined as institutions that represent a 'social order' of a state (Jepperson 1991:145).

16 The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

contenders. In other words the focus is on the ‘challengers’, such as immigrants and their associations and on ‘members of polity’¹⁷. Furthermore, it is – at least to a certain extent – a question of power: ‘all challengers seek, among other things, to enter polity’ (Tilly 1978:54). Contenders challenging the existing institutional system – to a greater or lesser extent – cause change in the polity system. Therefore it is not enough to explore only the institutional structure where the immigration policy-making takes place, but also to study the channels guiding the contenders involved to act in a certain manner. Later on in this chapter I will discuss the significance of institutional channelling.

In the analysis of the inclusion of immigrant groups it is important to take into account both the natives’ perception of the immigrants as well as of how the immigrants perceive themselves. For example, Barbara Schmitter Heisler has emphasised the importance of distinguishing between immigrants’ organisational contacts to their home countries, and with the “missing” or weak link between immigrant groups and the institutions of the receiving country (Schmitter Heisler 1980). In other words, when exploring the role of immigrant associations in the making of local policies it is important to focus on the immigrant groups’ ethnic background as well as the nation-states institutional system.

At this point it is time to introduce the last of the guiding theoretical input, namely: *the mobilisation model*. This model will be dealt somewhat greater detail than the two previous concepts due to its suitable application to the remaining theoretical discussion. According to Charles Tilly this mobilisation model consists of five characteristic variables: interest, organisation, mobilisation, collective action and of opportunity, which can be defined in the following way:

Interests: the shared advantages or disadvantages likely to accrue to the population in question as a consequence of various possible interactions with other populations.

Organization: the extent of common identity and unifying structure among the individuals in the population; as a process, an increase in

17 According to Tilly, ‘a member is any contender which has routine, low cost access to resources controlled by the government; a challenger is any other contender’ (Tilly 1978:52).

common identity and/or unifying structure (we can call a decline in common identity and/or unifying structure disorganization).

Mobilization: the extent of resources under the collective control of the contender; as a process, an increase in the resources or in the degree of collective control (we can call a decline in either one demobilization).

Collective action: the extent of contender's joint action in pursuit of common ends; as a process, the joint action itself.

Opportunity describes the relationship between the population's interests and the current state of the world around it.

(Tilly 1978: 54-55)

The last variable can be sub-divided into power, repression and opportunity versus threat. I will not go through all these variables but I'll focus mainly on those which can have a strengthening or weakening influence on the immigrant associations' opportunity to mobilise the members of their ethnic group. The mobilisation model is useful as a background model for the further examination of *ethnic mobilisation* and *resource mobilisation*.

Figure 3.2.1 is based on Tilly's mobilisation model. I will apply it to explain how immigrant associations' might mobilise their members and resources for achieving a collective action. The strength of the model is that it gives the analytical tools to explore immigrant associations' opportunities to participate and represent their interests in Finnish civil society. The weakness is that it does not enable a profound exploration of the construction of immigrant associations and of their interest. In this study the focus is on the immigrant associations. In other words, there is an assumption that both a mono- and a multi-ethnic group have interests which guide them to become organised as an association. For example, a mono-ethnic association such as a Thai association can claim for more visibility in Finnish civil society due to lack of premises and lack of representation in national and/or municipal advisory boards for foreigners. It can tackle the problem through collective action. For example, the association can organise meetings and events which help their members, and possible other actors, to participate in the planning of collective action, such as claims making for premises and for official representation.

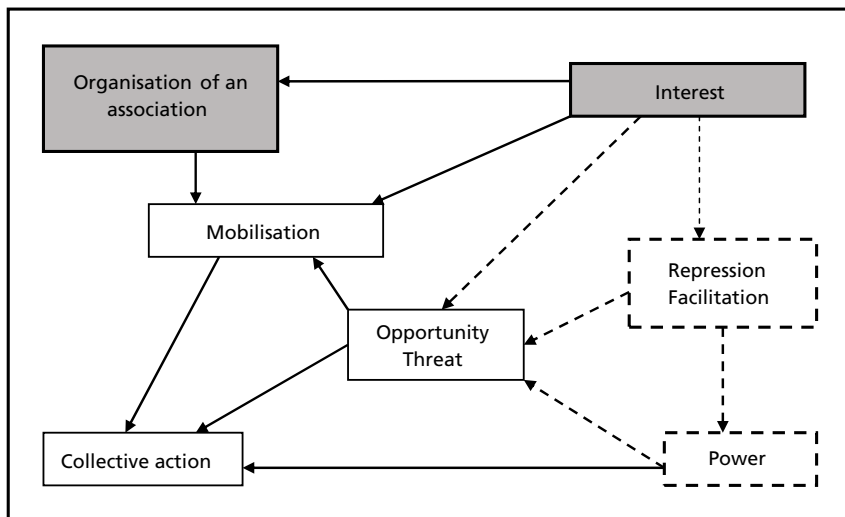


Figure 3.2.1 The revised mobilisation model (The original model is in Tilly 1978:56)¹⁸

There are some remarks that I would like to make regarding Tilly's model of mobilisation. I have replaced the concept 'organisation' by 'organisation of an association', because organisation is one of the basic elements guiding immigrant association. Additionally, there are two other elements which are not as visible in the mobilisation of an immigrant association as of an (ethnic) group, namely; repression/facilitation and power. In the case where an ethnic immigrant group is repressed in a society it can be assumed that its members' opportunities for collective action are also restricted. The importance of these two variables also depends on an analytical approach. For example political scientists, such as Robert Dahl, often emphasise the pluralist approach. There are two fairly dominant views among the pluralistic analyses of policy-making. The first is that 'repression is relatively low and spread evenly across the whole range of contenders and potential contenders, second that the cost of organizing and mobilising are also fairly low and equal'. In other words, the dominant actor which guides the collective action depends on the amount of opportunities or threats people face.

¹⁸ Dotted lines and the organisation of an association were added by the author.

In Tilly's mobilisation model, the political participants consist of active people who take part in decision making and can influence the repression and mobilising cost as well as 'minimizing the political/non-political distinction...'. According to Tilly the focus is on 'the power position of a group, which is performing "normal" and "abnormal" political action that matters and not the extent of opportunities or threats that a group can encounter'. (Tilly 1978:57-58). In this study repression, facilitation and power are less investigated. Forms of power relations are discussed in the analysis of the relations between immigrant associations and local authorities (see also sub chapter 7.4).

The above described theoretical model is, as such, insufficient to be applied to the analysis of the research data in this study. Therefore, further theoretical explorations are required.

3.2.2 Four central approaches

Previous studies focusing on immigrant groups have attempted to explain the inclusion or exclusion of immigrants from the receiving society by applying theoretical approaches, such as ethnic mobilisation, resource mobilisation, opportunity structure and new-institutionalism. In this chapter I shall look at these four approaches in Row 2. in Figure 3.2.

Ethnic Mobilisation

Immigrant associations have been a research subject in studies of *ethnic mobilisation* of immigrant and refugee communities, especially in the (re) creation of their ethnic identity (Barany 1998, Bolzman 1997, Griffiths 2002, Mikkelsen (ed.) 2003, Rex, 1994, Wahlbeck 1999). The (re-) creation of the ethnicity of a group is marked by ethnic boundaries that are socially and politically constructed (Barth 1969).

Ethnic mobilisation is likely to occur in situations where members of ethnic minorities feel excluded from the social resources (such as housing, employment and health care) of the society (Drury 1994). It can be seen as a part of immigrants' organisation process (Olzak 1983). Immigrant associations can be seen as a part of a larger mobilisation where the interests and needs of a minority group will be strengthened. This can take the form of proactive

or reactive action depending on the institutional conditions guiding the inclusion or exclusion process of immigrants (see also Castles and Davidson 2000, Chapter 6, Drury 1994: 13-22).

One of the immigrant groups' strategies to become organised is to establish associations and to organise activities based on collective interests and needs. Susan Olzak defines ethnic mobilisation 'as collective action that takes some of ethnic markers (e.g. colour, language, territorial identification) as criteria for membership' (Olzak 1983:357). Drury goes on by defining it 'as a process in which members of an ethnic group, in a specific situation [focuses on] 'group consciousness', 'cultural criteria or other symbols', 'organise and consolidate their resources' and 'promote and/or create --- collective goals' (Drury 1994:15).

Resource-mobilisation

Resource-mobilisation approach has its origin in social movement theory. Social movements (such as feminist, student and the Left wing oriented) in 1960's and 1970's Europe and United States became the focus of attention among social scientists, and raised new theoretical approaches. (Cohen and Arato 1992). These two approaches, "resource mobilisation" (in the United States) and the "new social movement" approach (in Western Europe), presupposed that social movements have their origin in conflicts between 'organised groups, with autonomous associations and sophisticated forms of communication (networks, publics)' (ibid: 496). Resource-mobilisation approach can be described as an elaborated form of collective behaviour theory. Instead of focusing on behaviour elements residing in psychology, the resource mobilisation theorists explore the 'logic of strategic interaction and cost-benefit calculation' (Cohen and Arato 1992: 498). The guiding elements of this theoretical approach are 'organization and rationality' (ibid). To understand the logic of collective actions, it is crucial to also look at the action repertoires, such as the shift in the struggle for political rights (Tilly and al. 1975). In other words collective actions, such as demonstrations, don't need to be directly linked to the *transformation* of the society, but more to the action *repertoires* and associations linked to the struggle for political power. Therefore it's important to look at the types of mobilisation which can

appear through collective action. To follow Tilly's analysis, two kinds of action repertoires can be explored; namely *reactive* and *proactive* collective action. The former consists of defensive and the latter of offensive claims making.

According to Cohen and Arato (1992:501) reactive actions can be described as consisting of 'communal groups threatened by efforts of state makers to gain control over the general population and its resources'. This can also be applied to cases where the "general population" consists of larger ethnic groups, such as Muslims in France¹⁹ or Sikhs in the UK (see also Ireland 1994, Rex 1994). In cases where the receiving society excludes the immigrants from society by offering them only few or restricted opportunities for inclusion, then immigrant associations might focus their associational interest on reactive forms, such as riots and fundamental expression that can broaden the gap between the majority population and the oppressed minority groups (Castles and Davidson 2000:129, Habermas 1994:118 see also Cohen and Arato 1992). The struggle for the recognition of ethnic identity is greater among immigrant groups in nations where the inclusion of newcomers is based on universal values without making a distinction on particular values of individuals (see also Habermas 1994:117-118). The demand for equal recognition can lead to "blindness" in the treatment of everybody in the same fashion which in turn is in conflict with the recognition of particularity (Taylor 1994:43).

Proactive collective action, in turn, focuses in gaining power, privileges, or resources' in a more peaceful way, such as through negotiations (Castles and Davidson 2000). In this case immigrant associations can be important mediators between the immigrant groups and the policy makers of the receiving society. Arenas for proactive negotiations consist of consultative institutions where a 'dialogue' takes place between civil servants and members of immigrant associations, who strive to improve their ethnic identity, socio-political and religious interests (see also Taylor 1994). The composition of these kinds of political arenas can be problematic, particularly when several ethnic

19 For example, in the 1970s, guest workers associations had a more direct impact on policy-making in France by mobilising their members to strike for better labour and living conditions (Ireland 1994). Later on, the same associations played a significant role as negotiators for the improvement in employment conditions of the second (and third generation) immigrants. These examples show how an association may use both pro- and reactive collective actions in the mobilisation of its members (and non-members of its ethnic group).

groups with a different class and clan composition should be represented equally²⁰.

The resource-mobilisation approach can work as an adequate model in the analysis of several ethnic groups mobilisation or the collective actions of their associations. In particular, the exploration of the so called action repertoires gives an illustration of how certain resources have been allocated and used within a certain time-period. The problem with the application of this model to the analysis of immigrant associations in Finland are at least three fold. Firstly, although the associations were established within a fifteen year period between 1990 and 2005, the majority of these associations were established from the mid 1990s. Therefore, the analysis of action repertoires, i.e. associational activities would have required from the very beginning a collection of activity reports from the associations. The fact is that only the more organised associations have minutes of meetings and annual reports etc. This would also have led to a diminishing of associations to only the most organised ones.

Secondly, the use of the resource-mobilisation approach can be difficult to apply due to the size of an ethnic community. What exactly an ethnic community is can be called into question; the immigrant groups in Finland are fairly small and dispersed. The problem would be the same as with the previous example; only bigger ethnic groups would be qualified for the collection of action repertoires²¹. A third problem which excluded the idea to use action repertoires was immigrant associations' lack for claims making. Instead, the immigrant associations share some common features with voluntary associations, in general. For example, a common interest for all voluntary associations is their members feeling of togetherness and need to organise themselves more officially to reach their interests and needs. In other words, resource mobilisation can work as a key in the analysis of the motives

20 A good illustration of a "cultural clash" between receiving society and ethnic groups was described by Philip Lewis in his analysis of cooperation of consultative institutions, local education authority boards with ethnic communities in Bradford (Lewis 1997, Chapter 7).

21 I did ask for minutes and reports from Somali, Kurdish, Ingrian and some multi-ethnic associations. Some associations also sent or gave material without asking, such as a Russian and a Kurdish association. These documents gave a clearer insight of the associational life of these ethnic groups. Still, there were several associations, which did not keep a regular record of their activities.

pulling people together and to mobilising towards collective action. Instead of focusing on the extension and frequency of action repertoires, it is possible to study the rational motives, and if these are cost and benefit friendly. This requires a data collection of the type of activities, their motives, costs and the final benefits which these activities have given to their members.

New-institutionalism

The focus of new institutionalism has specifically been on political actions and institutional arrangements on the incorporation of immigrant groups (see Ireland 1994, Statham 1999). Scholars of new institutionalism highlight the central role of migration and ethnic relations in the negotiation of national and local policies (Koopmans and Statham 2000:30). For example, the collective interest of immigrants is often directed by the receiving state, which plays an important role in the division of financial support but also in the control of organisational activities (see Ireland 1994, Layton-Henry 1990, 2004, Soysal 1994).

The idea of the institutional approach is to show how organisational behaviour responds to institutional pressure (as well as to economic pressure) (Greenwood and Hinings 1996). The old institutional approach has its disciplinary origin mainly in organisational sociology and political economy. In sociology, Parsons has been one of the dominating key figures in the elaboration of how society is interconnected with politics and economy. The sociological input has been particularly on the institutional integration and on common value patterns (Parsons 1951). Old institutionalism was influenced by political economists with a focus on mechanisms, such as transactions and influencing the occurrence of economic, social and political action²². Old institutionalism is characterised by coalitions, competing values and influence while new (or neo) institutionalism emphasises the embeddedness of organisational spheres, legitimacy and internal organisational structures, such as classification, schemas and routines (Powell and DiMaggio 1991:12-13). The distinctions between old and new institutionalism can be described in the following way:

22 In the late 1880s 'The American Institutional School' was established and influenced by Thorstein Veblen, John Commons and Wesley Mitchell which also introduced the German Historical School.

Because institutionalization was a process in which constraining relations with local constituencies evolved over time, older institutionalists regarded organizations as both the units that were institutionalized and the key loci of the process. By contrast, neoinstitutionalists view institutionalization as occurring at the sectoral or societal levels, and consequently interorganizational in locus. Organizational forms structural components, and rules, not specific organizations, are institutionalized. Thus whereas the old institutionalism viewed organizations as organic wholes, the new institutionalism treats them as loosely coupled arrays of standardized elements.

Powell and DiMaggio (1991:14)

The new institutionalism in sociology and organisational theory focus on cognitive and cultural explanations which are guided by 'taken for granted' thinking and not by choice (Powell and DiMaggio:10). The strong point of new-institutional theory is that it can provide 'a model for change that links organisational context and intraorganisational dynamics', but its weakness is that it does not explain 'internal dynamics of organisational change' (Greenwood and Hinings 1996:1023). In other words, this approach is mainly useful in the analysis of how organisations are combined and connected with each other.

It is possible to distinguish a sociological view within new-institutionalism. Sociological institutionalism has its origins in organisational theories and its aim is to show the influence of culture on organisational forms and procedures. Institutional sociologists argue that organisational procedures do not exist only because of their efficiency and rationality, but due to products of 'culturally-specific practices'. In addition, according to this view, it is possible to explain institutional forms by using a cultural explanation (Hall and Taylor 1996:946, see also Meyer and Scott 1983, Powell and DiMaggio 1991: 1-38).

In immigration studies new-institutionalism has been criticised for its lack of interest on; integration of ethnic minorities, the public discourse and the political culture guiding the institutional framework (Koopmans and Statham 2000). Instead, studies applying the new-institutional approach have primarily focused on political élites and on the entrance policy (ibid). Still, there some

good attempts, for example by Patrick Ireland, *The Policy Challenge of Ethnic Diversity: Immigrant politics in France and Switzerland* (1994) and by Yasmin Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe* (1994). In these studies the authors have applied new-institutionalism in the exploration of contemporary immigration politics in Europe as well as in an analysis of immigrants' opportunities to participate in policy-making.

In this study dimensions of the new-institutional approach can be useful in exploring how the grassroots actors interact with institutional actors. In the analysis I have taken features of new institutionalism and combined it with features from the opportunity approach described in following sub chapter.

Opportunity structure

The aim of the opportunity structure is to explore the role of official institutions and political practices. The opportunity structure, in its broadest sense, includes the analysis of all kinds of societal channels for the citizens into the social life. The opportunity approach is a theoretical view which started in the analysis of social movements. Political scientists prefer to focus mainly on the political opportunity structure, such as citizens' claims making and other kind of political participation. For example political opportunity structure has become popular in studies on mobilisation of new social movements²³ (NSMs), particularly in their impact through political parties (Kriesi, Koopmans, Duyvendak and Giugni 1997:52).

In immigration and ethnic studies the interest has been in the claims making and mobilisation of ethnic associations and their communities (Bousetta 2000, 2001, Martín Pérez 2003, 2004, Martiniello 1997). The use of political opportunity structure is suitable in studies where the focus is on immigrant community organisation and their political participation in the receiving countries politics. This approach enables the analysis of the political practices organised by members from immigrant associations and communities (Kriesi & al. 1997:52, Koopmans and Statham 2000).

According to Bousetta, in his review of related studies done by Statham (1999) and Ireland (1994), a greater emphasis should be given to the existing

23 The New Social Movements can be defined as movements that started in the late 60's, such as movements focusing on women's rights and on ecology or peace.

socio-cultural and socio-economic opportunities and their relation to ethnic factors (Bousetta 2000). The more diverse the ethnic background of the immigrant group is from the majority group (and other immigrant groups) the more important the similarities become within their own group. Therefore, it is important to analyse carefully the role of the cultural, ethnic and socioeconomic features in the organisation of an immigrant community. The social organisation of an ethnic community can reveal something about its 'institutional completeness'²⁴. The social organisation of an immigrant group, including its associations can explain to what extent an immigrant group is integrated into the receiving society. Nevertheless, one immigrant group can differ from another in its composition and institutional completeness. The problem with (political) opportunity structure is that the relation between ethnic and societal features remains weak. For example, the opportunity structure can help to explain how ethnic communities mobilise in their receiving society, but the influence of immigrants' cultural and ethnic background is not in the focus of the explanation of mobilising channels.

The strength of this approach is that it studies immigrant associations' collective action and possible conflicts in their attempt to get organised as an association and in organising collective action. Furthermore, this approach may provide explanations about how the societal sphere works, i.e. do immigrant associations have an equal opportunity to participate in Finnish civil society as the natives, or, if these associations are ignored and / or repressed in a direct or in-direct way.

24 In other words, it is possible to talk about institutional completeness only when an ethnic group has all the institutional services at their disposal (Breton 1964:194).

Table 3.2.2 The main theories of the study: Ethnic resource mobilisation and institutional channelling

Theory	Ethnic resource mobilisation		Institutional channelling	
Input	Ethnic mobilisation	Resource mobilisation	New-institutionalism	Opportunity structure
Strength:	Explains interaction inside and between associations.	Enables to explore how existing resources within an immigrant association are allocated	Explains the institutional process and its relation to culture in organisational context.	focuses on claims making of ethnic communities
Weakness:	The role of immigrant associations remains on the organisational level of a group.	Requires bigger ethnic groups that are internally cohesive and settled geographically densely	Does not explain 'internal dynamics of organisational change'.	This model does not explain immigrants' interests and motives for establishment of an association.
Possibility:	Clarifies how the organisational process of an immigrant group takes place	Enables to see the connection between actors/institutions that provide/hinder the access to resources	To find how convergence between associations takes place.	Clarifies the role of the existing political, socio-economic and cultural channels
Risk:	The connection between grassroots actors and institutional actors remains weak	focuses more on costs and benefits of an immigrant association than on its means to achieve the resources.	focuses too much on cultural and cognitive explanations and not on the influence of (rational) choice.	The connection between societal factors and ethnicity remains weak.
Aim:	Explains the influence of immigrant associations on the mobilisation of an ethnic group.	Studies the logic of strategic interaction, such as pro- and reactive actions of organised groups and their associations	Clarifies connection between grassroots actors and institutional actors	Explores collective action and social conflicts in the analysis of social movements
Aim in this study:	Enables an analysis of how the organisation process of an immigrant association takes place and the resource allocation of the association. Additionally, this view can explain the interaction strategies of immigrant associations with their contenders.		Permits an analysis of the Finnish governmental actors guiding the socio-political opportunities of immigrant associations. Furthermore it explores responses and reactions of immigrant associations to the institutional demands /opportunities.	

The strength and weakness of the four approaches

The four previously described theoretical approaches are current and significant in several studies of immigration, but as such, they are not in themselves sufficient for the study of immigrant associations in Finland. Table 3.2.2 shows the strengths and weaknesses of the four theoretical views and – indirectly – the choice for combining the theories into two dominating approaches, namely the *ethnic resource mobilisation* approach and *new institutionalism* approach. These two views are discussed in the following sub chapter.

3.3 The Main Theories of the Study: Ethnic Resource Mobilisation and Institutional Channelling

Ethnic resource mobilisation

The ethnic resource mobilisation view is a combination of ethnic mobilisation and resource mobilisation approaches. In studies of voluntary associations, there is often a basic assumption that associations are established for a more organised action of a group and for achievement of certain goals. Therefore, not only reasons for establishment but also the way how the members of an association work is of significance. This turns the discussion towards the allocation of resources. In other words there are two dimensions that are of importance in the analysis of associations, namely: a) the interaction inside an ethnic association and between associations; b) the allocation of the associational resources. These two dimensions are significant in the search for an answer to:

Research Question 1: *What does the organisational landscape of immigrant associations look like?*

Research Questions 2: *On one hand, to what extent do immigrant (women's) associations mobilise their ethnic group members to be incorporated into Finnish society, and on the other, to what extent do these associations strengthen the ethnic identity of their members?*

The first question focuses on immigrants' motives, interests and possible needs for an establishment of an association. To find an answer to this question two additional elements have to be included. The first is about the

organisation of an association. In other words, the focus is on the leadership and the management of an association. Additionally, the focus is also on the participation of members and non-members in meetings and activities. The second feature is *interaction*. The maintenance of an association cannot only be explained by the internal component, although these are also important. Therefore, the analysis aims to study the interaction between associations. This can provide details on how immigrant associations can support the integration of immigrants into Finnish society, their own ethnic group or to another ethnic community (see also Breton 1964). Furthermore, the interaction between members inside an association can give valuable information on the possibility of the association becoming a dominant player in the lives of immigrants. It can be assumed that the role of immigrant associations in Finnish society will remain weak as long as the ethnic associations have a lack of group cohesion. For example, ethnic cohesion most likely remains weak if the group cohesion lacks stability between the members, common interests and rules for achieving collective interests, such as premises or financing for activities. Additionally, strong ethnic group cohesion can lead to a completely different kind of inclusion of the immigrant group into Finnish society than the one with weak group cohesion.

The key features in the analysis of the establishment and function of an association consist of motives, interest, cultural-behavioural beliefs and values that guide the organisation of immigrants. In other words, the focus is much on the individual motives, which in turn have to do with previous experiences from the homeland, migration process and current life situation. The assumption for the establishment of an association is in the motives of immigrants. The motives can be strengthened or re-formulated by the perceptions of other immigrants. Previous studies of immigrant groups ethnic mobilisation have shown that when immigrants feel repressed in their receiving country they have a bigger need to get organised, e.g. into networks or into associations (Drury 1994). These grass-root level organisations can help immigrants to achieve their interests through mobilisation and collective action.

The ethnic and cultural dimension influencing immigrant lives can also be found in the ethnic mobilisation model. In comparison to the latter, ethnic resource mobilisation also includes features from resource mobilisation.

Resource mobilisation is a valuable approach when the aim is to explain of how a group mobilises its members. Unfortunately it does not provide tools for explaining the motives of the members, which in this study are at least partly influenced by the background of the immigrants. In other words, the cultural and ethnic dimension remains weak, but together with the above mentioned model it can work as a suitable tool for answering the mobilisation process of immigrant associations.

In the ethnic resource mobilisation model, the focus is turned to the *mobilisation process* of an immigrant association. This consists of features, such as interests, resources, collective action as well as of opportunities and threats. The latter feature also includes the element of power. Here, power is mainly defined as a tool for achievement of resources. It can take the shape of dispute or negotiation between immigrant associations and their possible contenders (such as civil servants or other immigrant associations) in their struggle for certain associational goals. On one hand, the significance of the power can only be validated by analysing the existing form of cooperation between associations; not only the concrete purpose of it (its function) but also its nature (e.g. consensus versus conflict).

For example, in the case where there are several ethnic associations interacting together frequently it can be assumed that they have a common will and ethnic resources that can enable them to reach their goals through collective action. This does not mean that the goals would be identical but they may gain advantage by acting together. Contrary to this, if there are tensions between the associations and if there is a lack of common resources then these issues can hinder mobilisation of an immigrant association. In the worst case the associational life can cease and end up with the diffusion of the group. Neither the strong social cohesion of an ethnic group nor its diffusion automatically means segregation or integration into the receiving society. In other words, the question is not only of the motives and interests from the immigrants' side, it is also a question of institutional opportunities provided or restricted by the receiving society. Therefore, another theoretical view can be useful for completing the analysis of this study, namely institutional channelling.

Institutional Channelling

To enable an illustration of what I mean by institutional channelling and how it is used in studies of immigration politics I will summarise the core ideas of Patrick Ireland's study of immigrant politics in France and Switzerland. In his work Ireland applies a theoretical approach that he calls 'institutional channelling'.

This approach can be defined as a combination of (political) opportunity structure and of new-institutionalism. The core components of institutional channelling consist of the political opportunity approach and theories of ethnicity and citizenship combined. According to Ireland these theories alone cannot provide a sufficient answer to: What kind of 'immigrant political activity' these 'specific kinds of institutional framework' stimulate or; if there is 'a connection between the participatory forms the immigrants adopt and the level and type of impact that they are able to win' (Ireland 1994:10). Therefore, in his study Ireland combines a wide range of political opportunities that the French and Swiss immigration policy provides for the immigrants. He focuses on the institutional structures and 'different "linking" process' which are part of these institutional settings.

Ireland's aim is to show how the state guided institutional context is in a key position in immigrants' inclusion in France and Switzerland. A comparison of these two countries provides a richer analysis of the institutional frameworks and their influence on the immigrants' participative opportunities. One of the main aims of Ireland is to show how ethnicity and class are ascribed perceptions of the receiving state, linking of immigrants into the institutions of the receiving society. These include everything from political parties, advisory boards to trade unions and associations.

The weakness with Ireland's work is the fairly weak explanation of the importance of ethnicity. This he explains mainly by immigrants' identification with their homeland and its politics. Instead of giving an answer to what ethnic identity is about, Ireland focuses on showing the differences between the immigrants and the receiving country. Still, the importance of the ethnic feature and the cultural background of immigrants are not highlighted. The analysis focuses mainly on the description of institutional structures and

processes. Nevertheless, Ireland's work provides a profound study of how the inclusion and belongingness discourse is shaped by receiving society's policy making.

In my study the aim is to apply institutional channelling with some differences. Firstly, this study focuses on opportunities of immigrant associations – not groups – to participate in the receiving society. Secondly, the focus is not only on political participation but even leaves the door open to cultural and socio-economic participation. Thirdly, the aim is also to explore how immigrant associations are represented on local and national advisory boards, and to what extent they can get their interest heard. Finally, this is not a comparative study in a strict sense. This study does not compare national immigration politics, although a small scale comparison at the local level does take place. This study discusses the integration policies in three municipalities: Espoo, Vantaa and Helsinki (the three major municipalities belonging to the Helsinki metropolitan area). In comparison to Ireland's study, my attempt is to show how the ethnic background and cultural differences can influence immigrants' motives and interests in establishing associations, organising activities and mobilising its ethnic members to join collective action, such as demonstrations etc. The aim is to find solutions to the research questions focusing on the interaction level:

Research Question 5: *How do immigrant associations cooperate with local authorities in the Helsinki metropolitan area?*

Research Question 6: *Do the immigrant associations get their interest heard in consultative bodies, such as local and national advisory boards for ethnic relations?*

Additionally, institutional channelling guides the exploration of the integrative agenda of civil servants (Research Question 3) and their perceptions of immigrant associations' aims (Research Questions 4). These questions are dealt with in Chapter 7. The assumption is that by first exploring the institutional setting and its actors, it is possible to find out to what extent the opportunities of immigrant associations are governed by top-down actors and legislation. Still, this approach does not give a complete picture of the role and activities of immigrant associations in Finnish society. Therefore, my aim is to use the

ethnic resource mobilisation approach for explaining the mobilising effect of the associations on immigrants.

Possible theoretical influences

It should be noted that the dialogue between the theoretical framework and data has been shaped during the analysis of the data. After the exploration of the first research question, i.e. in the charting of immigrant associations in Finland the first theoretical assumptions started to take shape and were further elaborated upon during the data analysis process. During and particularly, at the end of the analysis I elaborated upon two kinds of hypotheses from the data. These hypotheses were also influenced by the core questions and by the theoretical discussion, which were strongly guided by Tilly's 'resource mobilisation model' presented in 3.2.1.

The first hypothesis is directly connected with Research Question 1, whereas the second hypothesis is connected with Research Questions 2, 5 and 6. The connection of ethnic resource mobilisation and institutional channelling approaches with the core questions of the study can be analysed by exploring the following two hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: *An immigrant association cannot improve its position in the receiving society if the members do not have clear interests and a functioning organisation. These two elements guide the association's internal possibility to mobilise members from its ethnic group, i.e. the success of mobilisation depends partly on internal interests and organisation.*

The aim of 'Hypothesis 1' is to show the reader the influence of organisational skills and resources in the coordination and management of an immigrant association. The assumption is that immigrant associations function in the same way as any other (voluntary) organisations and are influenced by the internal organisation of the associations, such as members organisational skills, allocation of resources and their goals (i.e. interests and needs). The mono- or multi-ethnic immigrant associations' possibilities to mobilise members from their ethnic group/s is influenced by the internal organisation of the ethnic group and by age and gender features, i.e. by elements of the

ethnic resource mobilisation approach. This hypothesis is exemplified and discussed in Chapter 6.4.

Hypothesis 2: *The opportunities of an immigrant association to reach societal integration of its members, increases if its goals are in line with the integrative initiatives of institutional actors. The forms of power relation between an immigrant association and local authorities are dependent on the engagement of an immigrant association and on the activities of institutional actors.*

The aim of ‘Hypothesis 2’ is to show how immigrant associations’ efforts to reach collective action, is connected with external power relations. This hypothesis states that institutional actors can either directly or indirectly govern the opportunities of immigrant associations to participate and represent their members’ interests and needs in planning and decision making bodies. The sub chapter 7.5 illustrates four descriptions of interactivity.

3.4 Summary

The theoretical approaches discussed in this chapter all respond in different ways to the inclusion of immigrants into their receiving society. The theoretical roots of this study are theories concerning ethnic groups, mobilisation and institutionalism. These approaches do not provide a sufficient analytical framework in their current form for the exploration of the research questions. Therefore, I have elaborated on the theoretical framework by exploring other theoretical approaches, such as ethnic mobilisation, resource mobilisation, new-institutionalism and opportunity structure.

The ethnic mobilisation view presents the role of ethnicity in the migration process and in particular, in studies on ethnic associations. This view can be applied in studies of bigger ethnic communities and in the exploration of interaction inside and between immigrant associations. The weakness with this view is that it can be difficult to explain the importance of an immigrant association for an ethnic group if the associations are small and scattered. The resource mobilisation view explains the connection between immigrant associations and their informal and formal partners, such as Finnish voluntary

associations and civil servants. This view is useful in the analysis of bigger immigrant communities where the mobilisation process is more common than in smaller immigrant associations. Still, elements of the mobilisation model can also be valuable in the exploration of immigrant associations' mobilisation of their ethnic group members. New-institutionalism can be useful for filling the missing gaps of the two previous theoretical views. This view focuses on constraints and group conflict between political institutions. Furthermore, it enables a closer examination of the connection between grassroots and institutional actors. The fourth view, opportunity structure is known for explaining how claims making of ethnic communities takes place. The weakness of the opportunity structure is that it does not explain the immigrants background reasons for joining or establishing an association, i.e. the motives, interests and possible ethnic influence remain unclear.

Instead of analysing the influence of each above mentioned approach in this study I have combined them into two approaches, namely ethnic resource mobilisation approach and institutional channelling approach. The former focuses on the collective action of a group or an association that is derived from ethnic interaction and resource mobilisation. Here, the aim is to focus on how the organisation of an immigrant association takes place. Furthermore, this model enables an analysis of how interaction takes place between members or between associations. Additionally, this approach may enable the possibility to study the influence of the associations' life on an ethnic group's social cohesion. The institutional channelling approach aims to explain interaction of institutional actors and their contenders, such as immigrant groups and their immigrant associations. It focuses on top-down guided decision making in and immigrant associations' opportunities to represent their interests in political arenas, such as in counselling bodies.

4 Methods, Data and Analysis

Qualitative data collection and analysis have proven to be good working tools in the exploration of motives and opportunities behind collective ethnic organisation (Ireland 1994, Sudbury 1998, Thomas and Znaniecki 1994 (1918), Wahlbeck 1999, Ylänkö 2002). This approach has been popular in the analysis of the existing norms and values of the society and their impact on its members. The choice for qualitative methods consisting of multiple data in this PhD-study has to do with the research questions and setting. I have chosen to apply qualitative methods, which has enabled the opportunity to approach the various research questions, such as the experiences and motivation of the members. This method enabled also a profound insight to the work of civil servants working with integrative issues.

The type of data consists mainly of semi-structured and open-ended interviews and of documents. Beyond qualitative data there are small parts of quantitative data consisting of the number of immigrant associations in fourteen biggest municipalities.

My original research aim was to explore the claims-making of immigrant women's associations. Immigrant associations' claims-making has been a popular topic among researchers in older immigration countries, such as France, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom (see Berger, Galonska and Koopmans, 2004, Bousetta 2001, Koopmans and Statham 2000, 2003). In 2002 my initial charting of immigrant associations showed that research of immigrant associations was at a very early stage in Finland (see Saksela 2003). Instead of giving up my research, I decided to change the research objective from claims-making to the role of immigrant associations in the integration of immigrants into Finnish society and beyond. The pre-field work showed that immigrant groups had started to organise themselves into associations. Still, it was not clear in what way they contributed to the integration process of immigrants and how these associations participated at local, national and transnational level. New research questions took shape

during the outlining of my theoretical framework. The analysis process in this study has taken place at different research stages from preliminary hypotheses to more profound theoretical analysis. Common for different research stages has been that these have been guided by the core concepts of the study, such as 'ethnic mobilisation, participation, representation'. I attempted to achieve validity with regards to my data by applying triangulation. I compared memos with transcribed interviews and other kinds of data from the immigrant associations, such as their homepages and annual reports.

4.1 Entering the Research Field

The data for this study has been collected between 2002 and 2005: 1) The organisational landscape of immigrant associations, (February 2002 to December 2002); 2) The mobilisation of immigrant women by immigrant women's associations (December 2003 to November 2005); 3) The cooperation between the local authorities and immigrant associations (November 2003 to December 2004); and 4) The representation and participation of immigrant associations in (local) and national advisory boards (January 2004 to April 2005). In 2008 I revisited the homepages of the associations described in Chapter 6. The aim was to compare the information of the homepages with the interviews, i.e. to fill possible gaps of information.

Criteria for Selection and Collection of the Empirical Data

This study has not aimed at framing the selection of immigrant associations by any specific ethnic group. Nevertheless, the number of immigrant associations is in line with the number of immigrants living in Finland. By the end of 2005 the biggest immigrant groups, based on language, consisted of Russian speakers (39 653), Estonians (15 336), and refugee groups consisting of Somalis (8 593) and of Kurds (5 123). I did not select any mono-ethnic immigrant associations based on English speaking (8 928) and of Arabic speaking (7 117) foreigners, due to the fact that these language groups were too heterogenic and included diverse ethnic and national groups. Instead, I could have included in the selection Albanian associations, because there were almost as many Albanian speaking (5 076) as Kurdish speaking (5 123) foreigners living in

Finland by the end of 2005. The reason for leaving the Albanian associations out of the selection was their small number. By the end of 2002, there were only seven Albanian associations (Saksela 2003, Statistics Finland 2005). By the end of 2002, there were 28 associations established by Russian speakers who had arrived after the dissolution of Soviet Union, 40 Ingrian associations, 40 Somali associations and 21 Kurdish associations^{25, 26} (see Table 4.2). There are no Estonian associations included in the data, because I was unable to find any.

Another criterion for the selection of immigrant associations was gender. By the end of 2005, the estimated number of female migrants was 79 626 and for male migrants numbered 76 553 (United Nations Population Division, 2005)²⁷. In other words, the difference between female and male migrants was fairly small. I was interested to see, first of all, how equally women were represented in the associations. This was asked in the charting of immigrant associations. Furthermore, ethnic and cultural differences are somewhat different between the Nordic, Slavic, Baltic and Muslim countries. I was interested to explore if and how the representation and participation of women in immigrant (women's) associations differed between these mono-ethnic associations. The charting of the associations gave an overview of the ethnic composition, gender and age division and of the spoken language(s) in the associations. I received a more profound view by interviewing immigrant women's associations (Somali, Kurdish and multi-ethnic women's associations). Unfortunately, I was unable to find any women's associations representing women from the former Soviet Union or any Ingrian women's associations within the Helsinki metropolitan area.

Beyond the above mentioned criteria I tried to take into consideration other issues relating to the data collection. These consisted of four issues: time

25 This refers to the total number of Kurdish associations established by Kurds, who have migrated to Finland from different areas of Kurdistan. (Kurdistan consists of parts of Eastern Turkey, Northern Iraq, North Western Iran and smaller parts of Northern Syria and Armenia).

26 These numbers are based on a study conducted in 2002 (Saksela 2003). The number of immigrant associations, in general, has increased since the data collection. This can be seen by new mono- and multiethnic associations in the Helsinki metropolitan area as well as in other parts of Finland (see Pyykkönen 2007b and Chapter 6 in this study).

27 For more detailed information of the gender differences between different nationalities see Chapter 5.

of settlement, differences between first and second generation, internal and external factors of immigrant associations and of the physical surrounding amongst others. Firstly, the change from emigration to immigration in Finland took place at the end of 1980s. Therefore only the associations which were established between the time period of 1990-2002 have been examined. All data collected in this study focused on the *time period* between 1990 to the end of 2005. The majority of the immigrant associations were established in the mid 1990s, due to recent migration to Finland. As a result, the civil servants started to plan the integrative goals of municipalities from the beginning of 1990s. Secondly, the differences in activity preferences between *first and second generation immigrants* are mainly expressed in the activity types, which are described in Chapters 5 and 6. The number of the so called second generation immigrants or the children of immigrants who were born in Finland was still fairly low due to the recent immigration in the 1990s. Thirdly, the interest in exploring the structural changes *inside and outside* associations has to do with a broader sociological discussion. On one hand the focus was on the influence of immigrants' perceptions and cultural definition of their associations and their activities. On the other, the focus was to broaden the discussion of voluntary associations. Dimensions of ethnicity, culture and immigration bring new theoretical approaches into research on voluntary associations in Finland. (See also Chp.6). Finally, a majority of the immigrant associations are located in the Helsinki metropolitan area which consists of the municipalities of Helsinki, Espoo, (Kauniainen)²⁸ and Vantaa.

4.2 Presentation of the Research Setting

Research Question 1: What does the organisational landscape of immigrant associations look like?

The initial objective was to study what kind of role immigrant associations play in the integration process of immigrants into Finland. During the charting

28 Kauniainen was left out due to its small number of inhabitants both in the study published in *Indvandrerorganisationer i Norden. (Multicultural organisations and immigrant organisations in Finland)* (ed. Mikkesen 2003) and in the study published in *Maahanmuuttajien elinolot pääkaupunkiseudulla* (The living conditions of immigrants in the Helsinki metropolitan area) (ed. Joronen, 2005).

of immigrant associations I found out that there was a lack of background information about immigrant associations in Finland, and in addition, there had been no previous charting done in the field during that time. Therefore, the Finnish part of the Nordic study gave a more general illustration of the situation than an answer regarding the role of immigrant associations in the integration process. Nevertheless, this study worked as a preliminary field work for the purpose of my thesis. It provides information on how the structure and function of immigrant associations looks like, i.e. the organisational landscape of immigrants.

Information on immigrant associations was collected from the Helsinki metropolitan area and from municipalities with inhabitants of more than 50,000²⁹⁴. The data was collected by “snow-ball” techniques; in other words contacting individuals and organisations working with immigrant issues. Different municipalities and solidarity organisations were contacted to get further information on immigrant associations’ geographical location and of their premises in Finland. This kind of snowball technique, together with an exploration of the name lists collected from the *National Board of Patents and Registration of Finland* provided a somewhat thorough overview of the location of the immigrant associations. The problem with the information files was that they did not show if the associations had ceased their activities or if they were passive or so called “sleeping” associations. In other words, they exist officially but don’t have any activities going on. Further information was also received from voluntary associations and from some immigrant associations.

To get a more profound picture of the situation in the Helsinki metropolitan area twenty-four telephone interviews were conducted either with the Chair, the Vice-chair or the activity co-ordinator of each association (see also Appendix 7). All interviews were conducted with representatives for immigrant associations in the Helsinki metropolitan area. In the collection of background information a telephone questionnaire was used which consisted of nine main topics: 1. Contacts information of the interviewee, 2. Background information of the associations, such as Chair, board, number of

29 ⁴ Helsinki area: (Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa), Pori, Joensuu, Jyväskylä, Kotka, Kuopio, Lahti, Tampere, Oulu, Vaasa, Lappeenranta, Turku

members, year of registration, gender division, 3. Informal activities, 4. Formal activities, such as cooperation with civil servants 5. Financing, 6. Premises, 7. Counselling, 8. Contacts (local, national and international contacts) and 9. Communication. Additionally, informants were asked if there were any further issues they wanted to highlight. This proved to be an efficient tool to get basic information about the existing immigrant associations. (See also Table 4.3.1 and Appendix 2).

Research Question 2: To what extent do immigrant (women's) associations (a) mobilise their ethnic group members to be incorporated into Finnish society, and (b) to what extent do these associations strengthen the ethnic identity of their ethnic group members?

After I had finished the charting of immigrant associations in Finland, I continued to explore more profoundly immigrant women's associational life in the Helsinki metropolitan area. The data was collected more or less at the same time as for Research Question 3. The data from the women's associations together with previous data from the charting aimed to answer the Research Question 2.

The focus was not only on the organisational setting of immigrant women, but also on their participative and representative opportunities in Finnish society. The key questions were: What does the organisational landscape of immigrant women's associations look like? To what extent do immigrant women's association mobilise their ethnic group members to be incorporated into Finnish society on the one hand, and to what extent do these associations strengthen the ethnic identity of their members, on the other? In addition, I asked about their cooperation with local authorities and if these associations are represented in local or national advisory boards.

I conducted sixteen semi-structured interviews with representatives of five immigrant women's associations in the Helsinki metropolitan area. The interview sets consisted of three parts. The first one consisted of the collection of background information with the help of the earlier mentioned phone questionnaire; the second part was an open-ended interview focussing on background information of the interviewees and on their associational motives as well as on their perception on the goals, functions and changes in

the associations. The first interview part was conducted with the Chairs or Vice-Chair of the associations, while the second interview part was conducted among two to three members of each association. Moreover, observations and discussions with members at events and seminars organised by the associations provided additional information. Some of the members were interviewed several times to gain information not only for the main interview part (the second interview round), but also of the other parts (background information and control interviews).

The division of the interview sets into several parts as well as conducting interviews among several members of the associations provided an opportunity to receive further clarification for earlier issues that had emerged in the interviews (see also Oinas 2004:216). Due to this kind of repeated interviewing, the atmosphere became more open and relaxed, and subsequently the interviewee became familiar with the researcher (see also Oakely 1981). Signs of friendship and hospitality also appeared in this study. For example, during the interview sessions several interviewees served small snacks or the researcher was invited to their get together events. The hospitable atmosphere was also common in seminars and meetings either organised by, or with immigrant associations. I also participated in activities organised by the immigrant women's associations, such as meetings, get together events for their members and also in some seminars and courses. These events gave a better insight into the atmosphere in the associations and also to the members' management of activities. (See also Table 4.3.2 and Appendix 3).

Research Question 3: How is the integrative agenda set by local and national authorities?

During the research process I familiarised with legislative documents, planning reports and documents received from ETNO and from the municipalities. These were all useful in the analysis of the integrative initiatives of civil servants. (See also Table 4.3.3 and Appendix 4).

Research Question 4: What are civil servants' perceptions of the immigrant associations aims was explored in connection with Research Questions 5. During the data collection for the latter I asked about the civil servants' working tasks, problems and good experiences with immigrant associations. (See also Table 4.3.4 and Appendix 4).

Research Question 5: How do immigrant associations co-operate with local authorities in the Helsinki metropolitan area, and what kind of contacts do they have with the local advisory boards?

The objective of this research question was to shed light on the main channels of cooperation and possible obstacles between the immigrant associations and the local authorities working with immigrant issues. The results of this study were published in a joint-publication of immigrants' living conditions in the Helsinki metropolitan area (Joronen (ed.) 2005). This study was conducted jointly by the City of Helsinki Urban Facts, the University of Helsinki, the Research Unit of Espoo and the Research Unit of Vantaa. Structured interviews in form of questionnaires were sent to thirty-five local authorities working with immigrant issues of whom twenty-two answered. Interviews were conducted among: local authorities whom were members of the local Multicultural Advisory Board³⁰, co-ordinators working with immigrant issues, authorities from social services, project co-ordinators and authorities from the *Economic and Employment Development Centre* in the region of Uusimaa. The interviewees were chosen on the basis of their key positions as managers or co-ordinators of different kinds of social services for immigrants in the Helsinki metropolitan area. The questionnaire focussed mainly on: forms of cooperation, sharing of information, and on decision making of immigrant issues, such as immigrant associations' opportunities to participate in the multicultural advisory boards and in the planning of integrative projects. The questionnaire also included questions directed at cooperation between authorities and immigrant women as well as their associations. Semi-structured interviews which also included some open-ended questions were conducted among six immigrant associations and with a support association for immigrant associations. A member from the latter was interviewed to get

30 In Helsinki it is called as 'Advisory Board for Foreigners'.

additional information concerning the associations' needs and interest. (See also Table 4.3.3 and Appendix 4 and 5).

Research Question 6: Do the immigrant associations get their interest heard in the National Advisory Body of Ethnic Relations – ETNO?

The focus with the sixth and final research question was on *immigrant associations' representation in The Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations – ETNO*. In this research context there was already information in hand from the advisory board from previous research conducted by Lepola and Suurpää (2003). Therefore, I conducted semi-structured interviews with three interviewees, who had been members during the 1st (1997-2000) and the 2nd period of ETNO (2001-2004). My aim was get an illustration of the organisation of ETNO and how they had cooperated with immigrant associations from the 1990s until the end of 2004. The interviews focussed on the goals and organisation of the board; its function and also some open-ended questions related to the members' perceptions of ETNO's future. The data collection was completed by additional unofficial documents from the immigrant associations, official documents from ETNO and by legislative documents. (See also Table 4.3.4 and Appendix 6).

Table 4.3.1 Data collection for Research Question 1: The organisational landscape of immigrant associations, (continues on next page)

Research Question 1: The organisational landscape of immigrant associations				
Research object	Core question(s)	Interviewee(s) /Number of interviews (n) per interviewee	Method	Data
Africarewo ry.	1) What does the organisational landscape of immigrant associations look like? 2) To what extent do immigrant association mobilise their ethnic group members to be incorporated in Finnish society on one hand, and to what extent do these associations strengthen the ethnic identity of their members, on the other?	1 Chair (1)	Telephone interview	H, O
Anatolian Kulttuurikeskus AKK ry.		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	
Arabilais-suomalaisten perheiden yhdistys ry.		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	A, H
Ékgirtin ry		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	A, O
FC Somali ry		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	
Helsinki International Sports Club ry. (HISC)		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	
Ibn-Fadlan arabikulttuuri yhdistys ry.		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	H
Ibo residents*		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	
Immigrant Labour Association ILA ry		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	
Inkeri keskus ry		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	A, H
Irakin Naisten yhdistys ry		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	A, M, O
Iranilaisten Pakolaisten Federaatio ry		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	
Iranin ja Irakin Työllistämisyhdistys ry		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	O
Kanava nuoriso ry		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	H
Kurdistan komitea ry		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	
Kurdistanin Rauhan Puolustajat ry.		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	O
Multicultural Tennis Association M.T.A ry.		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	
National Association of Sierra Leone*		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	
SADKO-klubi ry		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	O

Research Question 1: The organisational landscape of immigrant associations				
Research object	Core question(s)	Interviewee(s) /Number of interviews (n) per interviewee	Method	Data
Somali Social Democrats ry	1) What does the organisational landscape of immigrant associations look like? 2) To what extent do immigrant association mobilise their ethnic group members to be incorporated in Finnish society on one hand, and to what extent do these associations strengthen the ethnic identity of their members, on the other?	1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	
Somaliliitto ry		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	H, O
Somaliseura ry		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	
Spektri Multicultural ry		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	
Union Latina ry		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	
Venäläinen kulttuuri-demokraattinen liitto**		1 Chair (1)	Telephone int.	O
	Total number of interviewees:	25** /25**		

* Ibo residents association and the Sierra Leone associations had not yet been registered.

** VKDL - Venäläinen kulttuuri-demokraattinen liitto has not been counted in my thesis as an immigrant association, because it has been established in 19x45 by Russian speaking minorities living in Finland.

*** This was a support association for immigrant associations

Explanation of type of data:

A = Annual report or other documentation about the association, H = Homepage, M = Memos made from seminars, O = Other kind of data, such as booklets, newsletters

Table 4.3.2 Data collection for Research Question 2: The mobilisation of immigrant women by immigrant women's associations

Research Question 2: The mobilisation of immigrant women by immigrant women's associations, (12/2003-11/2005)				
Research object	Core question(s)	Interviewee(s) / Number of interviews (n) per interviewee	Method	Data
Golis Naisten Yhdistys	1) How does the organisational landscape of immigrant women's associations look like? 2) In what extent do immigrant women's association mobilise their ethnic group members to be incorporated in Finnish society? 3) To what extent do these associations strengthen the ethnic identity of their members?	1 Chair (3), 1 Member (1)	S-I, O-E	H, O, P
Ziwar ry.		1 Chair (2), 1 Member (1)	S-I, O-E	P,O
Iraqi Women's Association ry.		1 Chair (2), 1 Board member (1), 1 Member (1)	S-I, O-E, P	A, O, M
Monika – Naiset Liitto ry.		1Activity coordinator (2), 1Board member, 1Member	S-I, O-E, P	A, O, M
Africarewo ry.		1 Chair (3), 1 Member (1)	S-I, O-E, P	A, M, O
	Total number of interviewees/ (interviews):	12 (19)		

Explanation of type of method:

P = Participative observations S-I = Semi-structured interview, O-E = Some additional open-ended questions

Explanation of type of data:

A = Annual report or other documentation about the association, H = Homepage, M = Memos made from seminars, O = Other kinds of data, such as booklets, newsletters

Table 4.3.3 Data collection for Research Question 5: Cooperation forms between immigrant associations and local authorities (continues on next page)

Research Question 5: Cooperation forms between immigrant associations and local authorities				
Research object	Core question(s)	Interviewee(s) /Number of interviews (n) per interviewee	Method	Data
Inkeri keskus ry	1) How do immigrant associations participate in activities organised by municipalities? 2) How do immigrant associations get their voice heard in local advisory boards for multiculturalism?	1 Chair together with 1 activity coordinator (1)	S-I + O-E	H, M
Irakin Naisten yhdistys ry		1 Chair (1)	S-I + O-E	A, O, M
Monika – Naiset Liitto ry.		1 Activity coordinator (1)	S-I + O-E	A, O, M
Hakunilan Kansainvälinen yhdistys ry.		1 Activity coordinator (1)	S-I + O-E	H, M
Monikulttuuriyhdistys Portti ry.		1 Chair (1)	S-I + O-E	O, M
USHA ry		1 Vice Chair (1)	S-I + O-E	M
Maahanmuuttajien tuki ry:n ***		1 Vice Chair (1)	S-I + O-E	M
Council: Advisory Council for Foreigners, Helsinki		1 Secretary (1), 1 Former coordinator. for immigration affairs(1)	S-I	E-mail interviews, D
Council for Multicultural Affairs, Espoo		No reply, answered by Coordinator for immigration affairs	S-I	E-mail int., D
Council for Multicultural Affairs, Vantaa		1 Secretary (1)	S-I	E-mail int., D

Table 4.3.3 Data collection for Research Question 5: Cooperation forms between immigrant associations and local authorities (continues on next page)

Research Question 5: Cooperation forms between immigrant associations and local authorities				
Research object	Core question(s)	Interviewee(s) /Number of interviews (n) per interviewee	Method	Data
Board of Education, City of Helsinki	1) How do immigrant associations participate in activities organised by municipalities? 2) How do immigrant associations get their voice heard in local advisory boards for multiculturalism?	1 Coordinator for Education (1)	S-I	E-mail int., D
Board of Education, City of Espoo		1 Coordinator for Education (1)	S-I	E-mail int., D
Board of Education, City of Vantaa		1 Coordinator for Education (1)	S-I	E-mail int., D
Department of Immigration Affairs, Helsinki		1 Coordinator for immigration affairs (1)	S-I	E-mail int., D
Department of Immigration Affairs, Espoo		1 Coordinator for immigration affairs (1)	S-I	E-mail int., D
Department of Immigration Affairs, Vantaa		1 Coordinator for immigration affairs (1)	S-I	E-mail int., D
Project: Avoin, City of Helsinki		1 Project coordinator (1)	S-I	E-mail int., D
Project: Join and Avain, City of Helsinki		1 Project coordinator (1)	S-I	E-mail int., D
Projects: Sisu and Integra, City of Helsinki		1 Coordinator of social services (1)	S-I	E-mail int., D
Project: SELMA, City of Helsinki		1 Project coordinator (1)	S-I	E-mail int., D
Project: Taakulo, Saaxib, City of Espoo		1 Project coordinator (1)	S-I	E-mail int., D

Table 4.3.3 Data collection for Research Question 5: Cooperation forms between immigrant associations and local authorities

Research Question 5: Cooperation forms between immigrant associations and local authorities				
Research object	Core question(s)	Interviewee(s) /Number of interviews (n) per interviewee	Method	Data
Projects: Hangool, City of Vantaa	1) How do immigrant associations participate in activities organised by municipalities? 2) How do immigrant associations get their voice heard in local advisory boards for multiculturalism?	1 Director for immigration services (1)	S-I	E-mail int., D
Social: Helsinki City Service Department/ Unit for Immigration affairs		1 Coordinator for immigration affairs (1)	S-I	E-mail int., D
Social: Board of Social Services, Helsinki		1 Member (1)	S-I	E-mail int., D
Social Services of City of HKI, Myllypuro		1 Activity coordinator (1)	S-I	E-mail int., D
Social Services of City of Espoo, Leppävaara		1 Activity coordinator (1)	S-I	E-mail int., D
Social Services of City of Vantaa		1 Activity coordinator (1)	S-I	E-mail int., D
Economic and Employment Development Centre of Uusimaa		2 employees working with immigration affairs (2)	S-I	E-mail int., F
	Total number of interviewees:	31 (30)		

Explanation of type of method:

D= Documentation analysis, S-I Semi-structure interviews, O-E = Some additional open-ended questions

Explanation of type of data:

A = Annual report, D = Documents or reports, H = Homepage, F = Follow-up of integration plans of the three municipalities, M = Memos made from seminars, O = Other kinds of data, such as booklets, newsletters, I = Semi-structure interviews including two, three open-ended questions

Table 4.3.4 Data collection for Research Question 6: The representation of immigrant associations in a consultative body

Research Question 6: The representation of immigrant associations in a consultative body				
Research object	Core question(s)	Interviewee(s) /Number of interviews (n) per interviewee	Method	Data
ETNO -Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations	How do immigrant associations get their voice heard in ETNO?	1 Member A (1)	S-I, D	A
ETNO -Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations		1 Member B (1)	S-I, D	A
ETNO -Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations		1 Member C (1)	S-I, D	A
	Total number of interviewees:	3 (3)		

Explanation of type of method:

D= Documentation analysis, P = Participative observations S-I = Semi-structured interviews

Explanation of type of data:

A = Annual report

Table 4.3.5 Additional background information

Additional background information				
Focus on:	Core question in GLOCALMIG****	Interviewee(s) /Number of interviews (n) per interviewee	Method	Data
Caixa – the International Cultural Centre	How does Caixa work as a multicultural meeting place for immigrants (and their associations)?	1 Chair (1), 1 Activity coordinator (1)	S-I	H, O
Total number of interviewees:				2 (2)
Focus on:	Data source	Methodology	Method	Data
Number of immigrant associations in Finland	National Board of Patents and Registration of Finland	Quantitative	Registered data collection	Statistics

Explanation of type of method:

S-I = Semi-structured interviews

Explanation of type of data:

H = Homepage, O = Other kinds of data, such as booklets, newsletters,

**** In the description of Caixa I used some of my previous data, which I have collected to GLOCALMIG (Salmenhaara and Saksela 2003). The GLOCALMIG study does not correspond with the research questions of my thesis, therefore only parts of the data (interviews with the staff of Caixa) have been re-analysed here.

4.3 Becoming Familiar with the Data

The data collected for this study consists mainly of interviews but also of participant observations and documents. Additionally, a small amount of quantitative data was collected mainly of a number of mono- and multi ethnic immigrant associations in Finland in 2002. The secondary data also comprised of statistical information on the foreign population in Finland and in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. The statistical data was received from the Statistics Finland.

A total of seventy-one interviews were conducted with members of immigrant associations and civil servants. The interviews lasted from forty-five minutes to one and half hours. The length of the transcribed interviews

was anything between four pages to twenty pages. The differences in the length of the interviews had to do with the informants' willingness to talk and to the interviewee's language skills³¹. When conducting interviews I used either Finnish or English depending on the interviewees' preferences. Tables 4.3.1-4.3.6 give a more detailed illustration of the division of interviews between the six research questions.

Semi-structured interview

Semi-structured interviews, which are also, known as thematic interviews were useful, because these enabled the choice of core topics in before hand (Hirsjärvi, Remes and Sajavaara 2001:195). Additionally, some open-ended questions were asked from the interviewees. In this way it was possible to get additional information and to avoid a 'too rigid' interview structure. I have chosen to use semi-structured interviews mainly because this helps to find similarities and differences between the associations.

In total forty-six semi-structured interviews with members of immigrant associations were conducted. These associations were chosen randomly (by snow-ball method) in the Research Question 1, whereas Research Question 2 focussed on both mono- and multi-ethnic immigrant women's associations. For Research Question 5 three mono-ethnic and three multi-ethnic associations were chosen and a Finnish association, which provided support for immigrant association. A semi-structured interview was conducted either with the Chair or activity coordinator (or both) from each of the six associations. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with three members from the former members of ETNO³². Here the aim was to get additional information of the function and structure of ETNO.

Structured interviews

The interviews with local authorities consisted of twenty-two structured e-mail interviews with local authorities. Two kinds of questionnaires were

31 Furthermore, some of the interviewees were very "talkative" and had to be re-directed back to the topic.

32 Additional data consisted of notes done during the meetings and seminars organised by the advisory board, protocols and of legislative documents.

sent: One focussing on the representativeness of immigrant associations in the multicultural advisory boards and another questionnaire focussing on immigrant associations' participation in integrative tasks and projects organised by the local authorities. The reason for sending e-mail interviews was the fact that e-mail interviews could be answered by the local authorities within a time-frame which suited them.

Open-ended interviews

In the data collection from immigrant women's associations I also conducted open-ended interviews. These interviews gave additional information concerning the interviewees experiences of voluntary work both in Finland and their country of origin (if they had taken part in voluntary associations in their home country) (see also 4.4.1).

Participant observations

Participant observations were done during the data collection from associational activities such as seminars³³, festivals and meetings. On two occasions these interviews consisted of an 'Arabic cultural day' in Espoo, get-together events organised by immigrant women's associations, multicultural festivals at CAISA where immigrant associations took part and of associations' meetings. From each event I made memos, which described the atmosphere of the event and the main happenings. These memos were normally two to three pages long.

Document analysis

Documents also play an important role in the analysis of the data for this study: '[D]ocuments serve not simply as source of ideas and information but also as an integral component of bench work itself (in the form of notes, recipes, instructions, and so forth) (Prior 2004:383). Along with the collection

33 I participated also in seminars organised by and for immigrant women's associations. For example, I took part in a seminar for women against discrimination and violence organised by one mono-ethnic and one multi-ethnic immigrant women's association. Furthermore, I participated in twice in a trainee course for support persons, which was also organised by a multi-ethnic immigrant women's association.

of data, different kinds of documentary data have been collected, consisting of reports, legal directives, booklets, evaluation lists, homepages etc. The documents can be divided into two formal and informal documents.

Legislative documents such as the Council of State's report (VNS 5/2002), L 66/1972, Aliens Act (L 301/2004), Association Law (L 503/1989) and Immigration Act (L 493/1999) were important sources for understanding the pre-conditions for immigrants participation in the Finnish civil society. Planning reports from the Helsinki metropolitan area, (e.g. Helsingin seudun kaupunkiohjelmahanke 1999, Helsingin Seudun Kehittämishjelma 1993) also provided important information about the integrative aims at the local and national level. Additionally, the follow-up enquiries from Economic and Employment Development Centre of Uusimaa (Te-keskusten seurantakysely vuosilta 2001 and 2002) were valuable when comparing the information from local authorities. Information of the Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations is based mainly on the report written by Lepola and Suurpää (2003) and on unpublished activity plans and reports for the time period between 1997 and 2004, i.e. the first and second periods of ETNO. In addition, I received information by conducting three interviews with three members of the board.

Documents received from immigrant associations gave a more detailed description of the activities organised by the immigrant associations. The documents consisted of annual reports, booklets related to cultural events or festivals and various kinds of homepages. Some of them were very informative and up to date and others only included the basic information about the association. The latter were often newly established and small with a small budget. Kurdish associations also had newsletters focusing on the current living conditions of the Kurds both in Kurdistan and in Finland.

Quantitative data

The proportion of quantitative data has remained fairly small in this study, due to the fact that there is little data on immigrant associations. The quantitative data consists of statistics on migration to Finland and to the municipalities in the Helsinki metropolitan area as well as of a number of immigrant

associations in Finland. The latter was collected for the Nordic joint study (see also Saksela 2003).

4.4 Analysis of the Data

The research process of this study can be divided in three research stages. Research Stage 1 consists of the creation of the theoretical framework (see Figure 4.4). During this stage the core questions, concepts and research objectives were defined. The operationalisation of definitions has been done in interaction with the data. This study has not only relied on previous literature but has also aimed to take into consideration features which are specific for the research objectives, i.e. the immigrant associations, such as the influence of Finnish integration policy and recent immigration to Finland. Research Stage 2 focussed on the creation of theoretical hypotheses. The hypotheses took shape after the charting of immigrant associations (Stage 1) and were analysed in detail after the data collection for the fourth research question was finished, (Stage 4). The hypotheses guided the combination of data and theory in the final Research Stage 3.

The four research questions have been analysed in different research stages (see Figure 4.4). This was followed by a re-analysis of the data. The aim of the re-analysis was to focus on the phenomena connected with the whole research setting and not only parts of it. During the data collection of different research stages new questions and ideas grew, which guided the generation of hypotheses. In other words, the generation of hypotheses was an important part of the analysis process. The final and more coherent generation of hypotheses was completed after the re-analysis. For example, the complete research pattern of the organisation of immigrant associations in the Helsinki metropolitan area and their role in the integration process has become visible after pulling together the analytical strings from the different research stages. The re-analysis has enabled me to see the connection between the institutional setting and the organisation of immigrant associations.

The completion of my data collection was influenced by external reasons. The study of immigrant associations in Finland (Saksela 2003) and the study

of the cooperation forms of immigrant associations (Saksela 2005) were both part of bigger research projects, therefore the data collection period was framed within these projects. The data collection of the ethnic advisory board was also fairly well framed due to the fact that ETNO was divided into three year long periods. I decided to stop the data collection at the end of the second period of ETNO, which finished in 2004³⁴. I also chose this as the time for completing data collection of immigrant women's associations. However some interviews were conducted in the spring 2005.

4.4.1 Combining theory with data

I started the analysis of the data by familiarising myself with how the core concepts of this study could work as analytical tools. In this study there are some key concepts guiding the framing of the analysis, namely: mobilisation, collective action and opportunities for participation and representation. My underlying assumption was that there are certain theoretical core features that are related to the above mentioned concepts. *Mobilisation* is the core actor in the immigrant associations attempt to activate their members and non-members of their ethnic group³⁵. Without mobilisation the immigrant associations cannot strengthen their visibility in their ethnic community (or group) neither their position in the receiving country. *Collective action* can be described as the outcome, (or the intended outcome) of an immigrant association. It can take shape in claims making, empowerment or as strengthening of the ethnic identity, amongst other things (see also Ireland 1994, Kastroyano 1997, Soysal 1994). Furthermore, the participation and representation are connected both in a direct and indirect way to the institutional channelling by civil servants. My attempt in the analysis of the data was to find out how the practices which take place inside and between immigrant associations guide the associations' efforts to mobilise their ethnic group members towards Finnish society, their own ethnic group or another ethnic group (see also 6.4 and 7.5).

34 Some of the interviews were conducted in the Spring 2005.

35 In cases of multi-ethnic associations the mobilisation focuses naturally on immigrants from diverse ethnic groups.

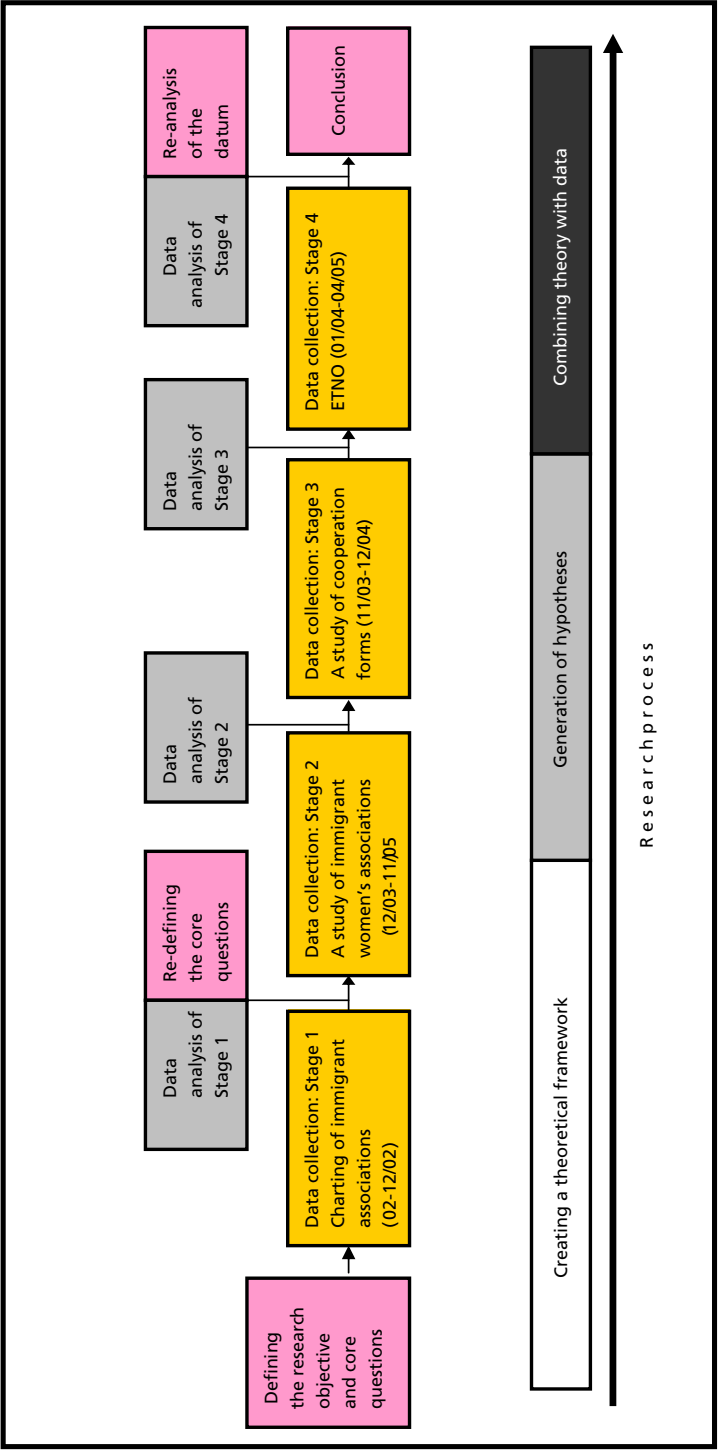


Figure 4.4 The Research process

The main sources of data consisted of information received from immigrant associations and civil servants. Additional information was received from various types of reports, booklets, directives and homepages. In the analysis of the interviews I used mainly 'open coding', consisting of an 'interpretive process by which data are broken down analytically', i.e. activity types and other events of immigrant associations are compared with each others and are given 'labels' (Corbin and Strauss 1990:12). This kind of coding was also useful in the categorisation of immigrant associations (see Chapter 5) and in the analysis of how local authorities co-operate with immigrant associations (Chapter 7.5).

I made a comparison of thematic issues with larger data based on information gleaned from the research questions 1, 2, 5 and 6. For example, in the analysis of diverse activity forms organised by immigrant associations it was important to take into consideration the connection between an immigrants' background and their current life situation. This, in turn, focused the attention on the 'sensitising of concepts', which could work as the starting point for a more comprehensive analysis (see also Hoonaard, van 1997: 27). Geertz³⁶ (1983) expresses sensitising of concepts as "experience-near" concepts, which refers to the terms that we use in our daily life to give a particular meaning for them. In other words, by focussing on terms used by the informants it is possible to interpret a deeper significance of the terms if these are connected to a broader sociological situation, such as 'care-giving', 'empowerment', etc. (see sub chapter 'Sensitising concepts') (see also 6.3). Additionally, the so called "core categories", such as 'participation', 'representation' and 'opportunities', which have their origin in the charting of immigrant associations have guided the analysis of immigrant associations' organisational process. I got a more profound impression of why some immigrant associations were able to strengthen their association but not others, by comparing the answers of the interviewees, e.g. why some associations focussed more on social contacts than external funding, or on ethno-cultural activities and not on integrative seminars. I got additional help for the analysis of the data from the memos that I have taken during and after data collection.

36 For a lengthier description of experience-near concepts see Clifford Geertz's *Local Knowledge. Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (1983).

Observations and memos

In the analysis of the data I have used memos, which have been useful mainly for making sense of the type of data and how it could be organised. Furthermore, the memos have also provided preliminary analytical insights into the data. Three kinds of notes were made in the early development of analytic drafts: substantive field notes, methodological notes and analytic notes (Burgess, 1984:166-174).

Substantive fieldnotes 'consist of continuous record of the situation, events and conversations in which the researcher participates. They are a record of the observations and interviews that are obtained by the researcher and of the content of documents.' (Burgess 1984:167). I mostly made these substantive field notes immediately after leaving the research context. Additional help came from jottings I made during the interview sessions, especially in cases where I could not use the tape recorder³⁷. These jottings could be key-words, abbreviations and names of persons or of places.

Methodological notes refer to the reflections of the researcher during and after the research project. The importance of methodological notes is the continuous role definition of the researcher in the research context (Burgess 1984:73) e.g. these notes provide information of what the relationship between the interviewee and interviewer has been; if it has been impersonal or based on acquaintanceship. In the analysis of the data, the methodological notes helped me to understand why and if the interviewee had interrupted the discussion or started to talk about something else. Interruption could take place due to language skills or by a visit from an acquaintance or children.

4.4.2 Reliability and validity of the study

The plausible outcomes from qualitative research are highly dependant on how the researcher can prove the reliability and validity of the study. This includes not only the final research results but also the process of the research and the theory generalisation from the data.

The aim of the empirical parts together with final conclusion is not only to show what the analytical framework looks like and to give a description

³⁷ These consisted of one interview and of participant observations.

of social settings but also to provide a way for controllability and empirical testing of these descriptions (Peräkylä 1997:201). The latter may be achieved by a clear and consist application of reliability and validity.

Reliability

The aim of reliability is to show the 'degree of consistency' where the researcher obtains the same results on different occasions or where different researchers measure the same research setting and receive the same results (Hammersley 1992:67). The reliability of the study – or credibility – can be achieved by following standardized methods, for example by 'cross-checking and cross-validating sources during the fieldwork' (Patton 2002:544-545, Silverman 2001).

In this study the attempt has been to obtain reliability by studying the same research question or phenomena not only by interviews but also by field observations, such as participation in activities organised by the immigrant associations and ETNO. Nevertheless, high reliability is not a rule for high validity (Hellevik 1977:140).

Validity

Validity of the data refers to proving the trustworthiness of the data. Attention is also paid to how validity of the theory is constructed, amongst others. By comparing the categories from data with the research setting and the interviews it is possible to find the 'so called' *theoretical validity* (Svensson 1996:214). This, in turn, is connected with *construct validity*. Here, the aim is to figure out the 'true statements' of the data by constructing useful concepts and by creating categories that can give validity to the study. An additional way to achieve validity is by *analytic induction*, in other words by exploring small amounts of collected data where the hypotheses are tested and reformulated (Silverman 2001: 240).

In this study most useful way to find the validity of the data has been by comparing statements of interviewee's earlier and later interviews, i.e. to find out if there are gaps in the interviewee's story and if so, make control questions in the final, open-ended interviews. The interviews are compared with a broader setting of data: a) memos done from events where I had taken

part, such as meetings, parties and seminars, b) other existing data of the association in question.

In addition, I have gone through different kinds of documents which I received from the immigrants. I tried find out their authenticity by paying attention to the form and context of the documents and to explore if there were some deviating aspects from its original purpose. According to Platt it is also important to focus on issues in the document that fit “too well” to the purpose (Platt 1999). For example during the analysis of the meeting protocols of one immigrant association it appeared that some of them looked very “simply” made both in their context and lay-out³⁸. To find out the authenticity of the protocol the context of the documents were compared with the issues they referred to (such as cooperation projects and seminars organised by the association). A further picture of the meaning and how they were perceived was gained by asking the Chair the issues discussed in the meetings³⁹.

Using triangulation

Further ways to improve the validity of the study can be achieved by *triangulation*. This allows the researcher to find possible gaps in her data and to construct a theoretical framework. The term triangulation has both a practical and metaphoric origin. The term is taken ‘from broadcasting; radio triangulation means determining the point of origin a radio broadcast by using directional antennae set up at the two ends of a known baseline’ (Oakley 2000:67).

Michael Patton has identified four kinds of triangulation that provide reliability and validation for research: ‘1. Methods of triangulation: checking

38 The meeting protocols included basically only place, date, name of participants, opening of the meeting, decisions done and topic discussed. The latter two issues were only written with two sentences.

39 Normally, the Chair started to talk about the current happenings without asking. In this case it appeared that the Chair had not written any protocols in English and had done it mainly because of the researcher. This was certainly not the purpose! On the other hand during the collection of the material the Chair started to write more extensive protocols, in some cases with a help of a Finnish NGO assistant. Another aspect that might have caused unreliability was the lack of competence in the Finnish language. Furthermore, there are cultural differences between management of associational activities. Finnish associational life is known for an organised way that may sound strange to cultures differing from the Finnish one.

out the consistency of findings generated by different data collection methods, 2. Triangulation of sources: Checking out the consistency of different data sources within the same method, 3. Theory/perspective triangulation: Using multiple perspectives or theories to interpret the data, 4. Analyst triangulation: Using multiple analysts to review findings.' (Patton 2002: 556).

In this study the focus was mainly on the all but the last type types of triangulation: the consistency and validity of the research was controlled by comparing the way material was collected. This consists of literature (including both scientific and non-scientific literature), interviews and participation observations. Another kind of triangulation was based on the comparison of the collected data. The data consisted of different types of sources like face-to-face and telephone interviews, booklets, seminar reports and homepages done by the members of the associations, as well as of research notes and memos written during the research.

4.5 Summary

This chapter has outlined the methods and data of this study. During the data collection, semi-structured (telephone and e-mail questionnaires), structured and open-ended interviews were conducted. Additional data collected consisted of documents and participant observations. Participation in activities organised by immigrant associations, and on some occasions by civil servants, provided a good opportunity for me to get a better insight.

The collection of data has been done from a more general to a more specific form. Therefore, a general illustration of the data has been obtained by a charting of immigrant associations in Finland. This was followed by studies of: the cooperation forms between local authorities and immigrant associations, activities of immigrant women's associations and of the function and change of The Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations – ETNO.

The data consists of some overlapping information due to the diverse research settings. For example, the criteria for data collection for Research Setting 1, was very different from the others. In other words, it was somewhat problematic to quote telephone interviews in comparison to e.g. face to face interviews conducted with members from immigrant women's association.

Nevertheless, both interview techniques provided lots of new and valuable information. The number at the end of quotations refers to the code of the interviewee.

During the course of data analysis, notice has been given to the reliability and validity of study. Reliability of the data has been achieved by following standardized methods, for example by cross-checking and cross-validating data, while exploration of suitable categories has helped to construct validity. A more profound illustration of the analytical process will be described in the Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

Finally, I would like to stress that I tried to take into consideration ethical issues during the data collection. During the research process data and personal information was carefully protected. During the conduct of the interviews particular attention was paid to the interviewees. The interviews were only recorded with the permission of the interviewees and their names have remained anonymous in this thesis. Information from civil servants has been collected by sending a letter asking for permission to conduct an interview. In the e-mails the objective and level of confidentiality was explained. Permission for data collection was granted in all cases. The names of the immigrant associations have been used with the permission of the interviewees.

PART III

5 The Organisational Scenery of the Immigrant Associations

The immigrants and refugees who have come to Finland since the end of the 1980s have started to organise themselves into ethnic groups, which takes shape in networks and associations (Pyykkönen 2007b, Valtonen 1999, Wahlbeck 1999). Nevertheless, this does not include everyone. There are people who prefer to stay outside any kind of ethnic group cohesion, such as some foreigners who have a Finnish spouse or those who regard themselves only as “short term labour migrants” etc. Furthermore, close geographical contacts to the homeland can also explain the lack of associations among some ethnic groups, such as Estonians.

The focus of this chapter is in the analysis of the structure and function of immigrant associations in the Helsinki metropolitan area. The first part of this chapter presents reasons and motives for establishing an immigrant association. It also explores the organisational structure and conditions guiding the collective interests of the associations. The second part presents a typological division of the immigrant associations based on the activities and goals described by the members. The data is from Research Question 1: The charting of immigrant associations and from Research Question 2: The mobilisation of immigrants by immigrant (women’s) associations. An illustrative description of immigrant associations is presented in Chapter 6.

5.1 Establishment of Immigrant Associations in Finland

Reasons for establishing an association is often a combination of individual and collective motives that together with the opportunities given by the receiving society, guide the collective organisation of immigrants (Bloemraad 2005, Jenkins 1988 and Vermeulen 2005). The migration process, such as immigrants' current family contacts and labour opportunities, has an influence on an immigrant's individual motives to establish or to participate in an immigrant association (Baillet 2000, Melisse 2003). Other, practical reasons influencing the organisation process is the time spent in the receiving country and the geographical location of immigrant groups.

5.1.1 Collective motives

The main reason for the Finnish state to support immigrant associations is related to the increased migration to Finland since the beginning of the 1990s. Since the revision of the association law in 1989 foreigners were granted the same rights as Finnish citizens to participate in associations (L 503/1989). The revision of the association law can be seen as the core explanation why immigrant associations can officially exist. The registration of immigrant associations has also made it possible for associations to apply for subsidies from the municipalities, ministries and other official institutions. The opportunities to get state and municipal support can be seen at least as a partial reason to establish official associations instead of immigrant networks (see also Caponio 2005:935, Bloemraad 2005, Ireland 1994, Soysal 1994).

Collective motives for immigrants to establish an association is their interest to maintain their ethnic culture and to become integrated to the receiving society, especially to sectors such as the labour market, health-care system and education. The latter interest refers to the reciprocal inclusion where immigrants become part of Finnish society but where they can still maintain their own culture. It should be noted that "ethnic identity" is not something obvious or taken for granted by the immigrants. The 'national' identity of the immigrants is re-created in the migration process and often demarcated by the receiving society's social and political order and by the immigrants

interaction with the majority population (see also Vertovec 2004:978-979). The dual belonging in the form of 'bifocality' can take shape in e.g. transnational activities focussing 'dual associational goals', such as on the homeland and on the inclusion of the ethnic group members in the receiving society (Vertovec 2004, Østergaard-Nielsen 2001).

Several members from immigrant associations mentioned as their motivation to establish an association, the *need to improve their life situation*. In general people distinguish their class background by speech, dress and social environment often in situations outside of any specific organisations, such as their working place, family or voluntary associations (Bourdieu 1984). Instead, participation in a voluntary association does not need to be based on class position (Ahrne 1994:75). The importance of class was not emphasised in the answers of the interviewees, although the background of the members differed a lot. Some of the members had a university degree and experiences from associational life in their homeland, whereas other members did not have any kind of higher education qualification nor experiences from working life or civic practices. A lack of information concerning of the members' background in this study has to do with the focus of interviews in Research Question 1: Charting of Immigrant associations. The focus was mainly on the structure of an association and not on the members' educational background or socio-economic status. The answers received from interviewees representing thirty-two different immigrant associations stressed that the interest of the members to participate had to do with their current life situation, such as lack of information of the socio-economic opportunities in the Finnish society, problems of inclusion among the second generation immigrants or the worry about people living in their homeland (see also Chapter 6).

Immigrants need information of their rights and of the changes in the [Aliens] Act, the labour market and the city [of Vantaa]. Several immigrants have questions of how to fill-in different kinds of application forms. 10 % of the immigrants have a huge need to get kind of 'preventive' support before their problems grow too big.

Member of a multi-ethnic association, CC1

The analysis of the data highlighted only the connection between members' occupational orientation and recent experiences as an immigrant in Finland. For example, several active members of Somali and Kurdish women's associations had received an education in the field of social and health care, either in their country of origin or in Finland.

Our association got its beginning when I was working as assistant of child care in a day-care centre. During that time I had discussed with other Somali women to do something together. First, we met regularly but later on we decided to establish an own association. Our aim is to improve the inclusion of women and girls to the Finnish society. In 2002 we have got financing from Ministry of Education to organise handicraft courses for women. We have organised courses in 'Caisa' and there we have "twisted the strings" between Somalis and Finns. --- We have also organised a handicraft course for women in Somalia together with an association there.

Member of a mono-ethnic association, BC1

After that I finished working as a support person in the project I wondered why women kept on contacting me. I discussed of this with a friend of mine and we decided to establish an association or actually a network for Kurdish women --- we would like to improve the living conditions of Kurdish and other immigrant women in Finland.

Member of a mono-ethnic association, BC1

These immigrant women shared a common interest to work as a support person and to provide activities in the form of *social togetherness* for women who had a lack of social ties. Expressions of solidarity are common particularly in immigrant associations which represent the needs of an ethnic minority group that is on the margins of the receiving country's socio-economic domain (Quiminal et al. 1995, Quiminal et Timera 2002, Wihtol de Wenden and Leveau 2001).

Further reasons for immigrants to establish an association was the possible *internal pressure in their ethnic group*. For example, immigrant women have established their own associations in the cases where women in their group are

in a marginalised position or where they are oppressed by the male partners (see also sub chapter 6.3).

Immigrant associations have also been established with the aim to *fight against social exclusion* of ethnic group members from the Finnish society. For example, Somalis have established associations with integrative goals where the goal was also to teach the youth their traditions, religion and their language (see also 6.1.3 and 6.1.4). Sport activities have also been supported by social and cultural boards of the municipalities (Saksela 2005).

Some immigrant associations organised their activities mainly for *transnational purposes*, e.g. with developmental, religious or political goals. The data showed that people who are living in diaspora had an interest to improve the living-conditions in their homeland, or ethnic area, such as Kurdistan (see also Chapter 6). Transnational associations had clearly defined activity forms to achieve their goals. For example, refugees often had a profound knowledge of the current needs and problems of their friends and relatives living in their home town. These kinds of networks helped to start cooperation between an association in Finland and for example, in Somalia. In particular, for immigrants or refugees who are not familiar with Finnish society it can be easier to focus their activities towards their country of origin than to their ethnic group living in Finland. For example, a Somali women's association has established an orphanage house in Somalia. The association cooperated both with voluntary associations and civil servants in Somalia. In Finland, this association also had activities for women, but these were mainly recreational.

5.1.2 Geographical location of the immigrant groups

In Finland a majority of the immigrant associations have been established since the mid 1990s. By the end of the 1990s there were between 560 and 700 unregistered and registered associations focusing on immigrants' interest in Finland (Pyykkönen 2007b). By the end of 2002, 563 registered associations were found from the fourteen biggest municipalities (Saksela 2003). These consisted of 221 immigrant associations established by immigrants themselves and of 342 multicultural associations including both natives and foreigners, such as solidarity and friendship associations (see Table 5.1.2).

Table 5.1.2 Immigrant associations in the 14 biggest municipalities

	H	Jo	Jy	Ko	Ku	L.	La	O	P	T	Tu	V	Tot
Immigrant associations	127	4	7	5	8	7	5	-	3	20	33	2	221
Multicultural associations	143	6	19	3	8	19	9	14	7	48	59	7	342
In total	270	10	26	8	16	26	14	14	10	68	92	9	563
Abbreviations: H: Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa, Jo: Joensuu, Jy: Jyväskylä, Ko: Kotka, Ku: Kuopio, L: Lahtis, La: Lappeenranta, O: Oulu, P: Pori, T: Tampere, Tu: Turku, V: Vaasa													

Source: Saksela, 2003:252

The majority of the immigrant associations are located in the Helsinki metropolitan area (127 immigrant associations) (Saksela 2003). Both the number of immigrant associations and their geographical area goes hand in hand with the recent immigration history to Finland. Since the late 1980s the internal migration of foreigners to the Helsinki metropolitan area has increased (Ahlgren-Leinvuo 2005). Specific to the Finnish case is the fairly high number of Somali (40 associations), Ingrian (40 associations) and (28) associations representing the Russian speaking population (Saksela 2003:252).

During the charting of immigrant associations I received contacts of immigrant associations from Finnish volunteer associations and culture centres of 14 municipalities, who were in contact with immigrant associations. Several of these contacts were old, i.e. either the members of the associations did not practice any kind of activities or the association had ceased. Data was also collected from the *National Board of Patents and Registration of Finland*. The problem with the latter is that it does not require an up-dating of the association once it is registered. In other words, there are most likely also so called “sleeping” or passive associations which do not currently have any kind of activity forms (see also Vermeulen 2005). Instead, it was very likely that the number of “dead” or non-existing associations was fairly small in the time of data collection because of the short time between registration, (which in the

majority of the cases was shortly before or after the year 2000) and the data collection in 2002.

5.1.3 The organisation of an immigrant association

To understand the function of immigrant associations it is crucial to analyse their internal and external components guiding the organisational scenery of immigrants. The following sub chapter describes the internal structure of the associations and their main human and material resources. The *structure of the association* consists of basic components of an organisation, such as the profile of the association (goals), language spoken (mono/multi-ethnic), its composition (the Chair, board, members and visitors or 'non-members') and the division of tasks. In addition, an important part of the organisational composition consists of the management of human and material resources. *Human resources* consist of features such as: member - and leadership, affiliation (with focus on trust), contacts (networks), sharing of information and tasks. *Material resources*, in turn, consist mainly of financing and premises (Saksela 2003).

The Structure of the immigrant associations

A majority of the thirty-two associations interviewed in the Helsinki metropolitan area were registered between 1995 and 2002. Several of them were established one or two years before official registration in *National Board of Patents and Registration of Finland* (NBPR). By the end of 2002 the number of members in these immigrant associations was between ten and two hundred (Saksela 2003: 258). Fourteen of the thirty-two associations had less than fifty members, whereas the number of members differed between fifty to two hundred in sixteen associations. Additionally, one mono-ethnic association⁴⁰ had less than ten members, whereas an umbrella association for Somalis had more than two hundred members.

40 The small number of members in this mono-ethnic association can be explained by its novelty. The association was established by the end 2001, (shortly before the information was collected at the beginning of 2002). The umbrella association, in its turn, represented several other associations including Somalis from different clans and age groups.

The main languages spoken in nine multi-ethnic associations were Finnish and English. The biggest ethnic groups according to language spoken consisted of six Somali spoken associations, which had 2065 members in total. We have to remember that the Somalis do not consist of a homogenous group. Instead, there were big differences between the clans, which partly explained the fairly large amount of associations in Finland. For example, by the end of 2002, there were more than forty Somali speaking associations established of which thirty-four were established in the Helsinki metropolitan area (Saksela 2003: 252). The second biggest language group consisted of six Kurdish associations, which had in total 740 members. These Kurds came from different parts of Kurdistan. For example, there was one association representing Kurds from Iraq and Iran and another from the Turkish part. The third largest language group consisted of Russian speaking referring to people from the former Soviet Union. These consisted of three larger associations which have approximately 100 to 200 members. The remaining language groups consisted of smaller ethno-cultural associations, such as Turkish, Spanish (with members from Latin America) and Arabic. This review of languages, spoken by the members of the immigrant associations, strengthened the picture of the most visible immigrant associations: the Somali, the Kurds and by the Russian speaking. It is important to remember that the first two groups consisted of refugees and their children (some of whom were born in Finland). Political circumstances had not changed much from the time when these people left their country of origin which may explain why the associations of these two groups were motivated to integrate their members into Finnish society.

Human resource allocation

Organisations are social mechanisms that connect a large number of human wishes and hopes into common consolidated actions.

Ahrne (1994:3)

Organisations or associations have an important place in the life of human beings. They provide us with the tools to organise our life in a more rational way and provide us with opportunities to achieve our collective goals. The

problem with organisational management is not so much in the allocation of resources but in finding the optimum way to 'construct human groupings that are as rational as possible, and at the same time to produce a minimum of undesirable side effects and a maximum of satisfaction' (Etzioni 1964:2). In the same way the availability of the right kinds of human and material resources are crucial for the immigrant associations in their creation of collective forms and discourses (see also Weldon 2006).

During the initial stage of an association, the members have to devote a lot of time and energy to build a stable organisational structure (Vermeulen 2005:48). In a case where the members of the association do not manage to create trust and affiliation then it will be difficult for them to create contact networks and share information, which is crucial for the survival for an association. A lack of the above mentioned features can end up with ceasing of an association (ibid, Aldrich 1999: 228-231). The organisational structure of an association can be strengthened by its members' affiliation and by good leadership skills.

The *leadership* is not always an easy task. It requires a good knowledge of the needs and interests of the members as well as of the existing opportunities to improve the goals of the association. There is a risk that the Chair becomes too straightforward with the achievements of the associational interest and creates tensions between his/her own association and the others, or that there is tension within the association. For example, some members complained that they could not collaborate with other immigrant associations because these were 'too self-centric' and did not take into consideration the real interest of other ethnic group members.

It's common that bigger associations ask smaller associations to collaborate with them, but in reality they are not interested in collaborating. Umbrella associations have taken our association in their activities but have not listened to our wishes. They have just wanted our name to their list of associations.

Member of a mono-ethnic association, BC1

Membership is another core component for creating affiliation and also for gaining financing to the associations. Becoming (registered) a member strengthens the person's position in the association by giving possibilities to participate in the planning and decision making process (see also Ahrne 1990:126). According to the Chairs of immigrant associations, the most efficient way to recruit members was by face-to-face contacts at social and cultural events. The associational life of immigrants was often kept alive by a few active members who organised and coordinated the association. Therefore, the working load was often divided between the active members of the associations, such as the Chair, secretary and project coordinators.

The relation between the members and the leader of an immigrant association is influenced by the *affiliation*. Membership as such strengthens affiliation between the members in the association. The affiliation includes both duties and rights, such as the duty to participate in meetings, pay membership fees and the right to vote in it (see also *ibid*). Unfortunately, members in immigrant associations were not always aware of their duties. If the members did not feel committed to organise activities it could end up in mistrust and negligence of tasks.

Last year our association participated in an international food festival, but this year we will not participate. It's too time demanding when practical things are left all on your own. I don't want to put myself in a difficult situation if the other ones will not show their commitment.

Member of a mono-ethnic association, BD1

The creation of affiliation is also connected with creation of trust and affiliation between the members. Kaunismaa argues, that in civil society the membership is based on members' voluntary participation in associations, in other words on fairly weak ties: 'Still, it is the 'power' of weak ties which makes the actor and the network(s) of connected actors strong, because it is likely that these networks include a great amount of trust and norms of collaboration'⁴¹ (Kaunismaa 2001: 123). The immigrant associations had created *contact*

41 Free translation from: Kevyet siteet tekevät kuitenkin toimijasta ja toimijoiden verokostosta kokonaisuudessaan vahvan, sillä verkostoihin kitkeytyy todennäköisesti suuri määrä keskinäistä luottamusta ja yhteistyön vastavuoroisia normeja Kaunismaa 2001:123).

networks consisting of members' contacts with other immigrant associations, but at the beginning of the beginning of this century only some had contact with Finnish voluntary associations and authorities (Saksela 2003: 2005). These relations were mostly based on active members' time and energy to keep contacts with other associations. The analysis of cooperative forms between immigrant and local authorities showed that immigrant associations were interested to have more stable relations with local authorities and Finnish NGOs (Saksela, 2005). A common reason for the lack of contacts with the Finns was the immigrants' lack of information of other voluntary associations. Some Chairs of the associations pointed out that they cannot strengthen their association due to the lack of contact with the Finnish majority population (ibid). In other words, their creation of associational capital does not become strong as long as it is based on more or less the same members and social ties from the members' own ethnic group. Therefore new contacts, even if they are weak, are required to strengthen the networks of the associations. Weak contacts can provide more valuable information for the immigrant associations than their own ethnic contacts that are often familiar and strong (see also Granovetter 1973). It could be called into question how seriously some of the associations had tried to improve their associational life because in the charting of immigrant associations, several contacts turned out to be old.

A general issue in the life of a voluntary association is the management of *time*. The board members faced a problem with finding enough members who would have enough time to engage in associational activities. In addition, it is difficult to find a time suiting everyone's timetable. Time was also a problem for members to participate in the working group meetings of the multicultural advisory boards of Espoo and Vantaa as well as in the meetings of local and national advisory boards. The time of the meeting was often during working hours and it was sometimes difficult for immigrants to take leave from work. According to a member of ETNO, the main reason was not the office hours but the schedule of immigrants who might work as private entrepreneurs, such as keeping a restaurant running.

Interviewer: *Have you ever tried to organise your meetings in the evening, so that people who work during the day time can participate in them?*

Interviewee: *No, no we don't organise these in the evening, although we could have done it...but we did as usually in ETNO, so from eight to four [working hours] is not the main reason. I even believe that our administrators would have come there in the evening but I don't think that it would have made things much easier at least not for our delegation. Perhaps for someone else, but then running a restaurant is also kind of business that the evenings are even busier time...*

An interviewee from ETNO, D1

According to the interviewees, a further problem was often an uneven *sharing of information and tasks* between the members. Some members highlighted that there exists a risk with 'creation of bottle-necks'. These persons can also be called 'middle-men' or 'boundary spanners'. They are persons who work between their own association and their contact persons (Alter and Hage 1993:46). In other words, there is a risk that tacit knowledge remains as information for one person and is not shared amongst the others. This has to do with a lack of resources to employ (more) members who could be in charge of the organisation of activities, or of general associational management. As one project co-ordinator for an Ingrian association put it:

We have one shortcoming in our association – that has to do with us – our sharing of information does not work well. We have not had enough resources to organise proper information system. It has been a target that we should now get organised. – To get a real publicist, because we have lots of activities! For example I have not resources for everything – e.g. to up-date the websites. We have now had quite low profile.

Member of a mono-ethnic association, CB1

Material resource allocation

Subsidy policy and contacts with civil servants govern the immigrant associations opportunities to participate and to represent their activities in the civil society (see also Bloemeraad 2005, Caponio 2005, Poppelaars 2007,

Pyykkönen 2007b and Vermeulen 2005). Recent studies have shown that there is a risk of 'crowding out' of ethno-cultural oriented immigrant associations in cases where the subsidising institutions can govern over the financing of immigrant associations' activity forms Caponio 2005, Bloemeraad 2005, see also Ireland 1994:8-11, Soysal, 1994:86).

In Finland immigrant associations get subsidies more or less with the same principals as the Finnish voluntary associations from the State, municipalities and *Finland's Slot Machine Association*. The State, as well as some municipalities, provides some additional support for the maintenance of ethnic minority culture. In the interviews members pointed out as their main subsidy donors the Finland's Slot Machine Association and the Ministry of Education. For example, the Ministry of Education has financed Finnish language courses of several mono- and multi-ethnic associations, (see also Chapter 6). The cultural, social, and health boards of municipalities provide small subsidies as well as premises for associational activities. They also give information for immigrant associations about application procedures and dates. (Saksela 2005:96)

During the data collection in 2002-2005, the Ministry of Education was mentioned as the subsidy provider for ethno-cultural activities organised by immigrant associations. Still, in the interviews members from ten immigrant associations pointed out that they had not received any financing for their cultural activities (Saksela 2003, unpublished interviews (2003-2005). The data did not reveal information of activities which were organised without subsidies. In practice, the number of non-financed cultural activities may have been even greater. Naturally, not all types of activities need external financing.

Participation in joint projects together with other immigrant associations, Finnish voluntary associations or local authorities was a further way to finance activities. The projects were often financed either by municipalities, or by the EU, especially by the 'European Social Fund – ESF', or both. An additional way to finance activities was through membership fees, but these were fairly small (5-10 Euros/members) and covered only small parts of the costs. Several of the associations were geographically scattered and unaware of each others

existence. It is not uncommon that several immigrant associations apply for financing for the same purposes. (Saksela 2003).

According to the Chairs of immigrant associations the biggest problems for the development of their associational life had to do with: lack of funding, lack of information and of contacts with the majority population and problems with the finding of premises (Saksela 2003, 2005 and unpublished data from immigrant women's associations). Other fairly common problems with allocation of material resources were the use of computer and accountancy. It appeared that a common problem for immigrant associations was not only to get information of possible resources for funding but also to write an application in fluent Finnish:

Financing is the problem; you have to write 'millions' of different kinds of applications in good Finnish. We have received a negative reply for approximately 80% of our applications: 'good idea but somebody else had better'. In other words we haven't been capable to express ourselves clear enough. Neither have we known the rules. The majority population knows the rules. They know what it is worth to emphasise.

Member of a multi-ethnic association, CA1

Premises

Finding premises was another big problem among the immigrant associations. Table 5.1.3 shows the premises for an office and the meeting places of members from the associations. This table includes information from thirty-two associations of which some mentioned several meeting places due to the fact that they did not have any permanent premises. Furthermore, sport activities were often organised outdoors or in a sports hall which also functions as a meeting place. The most common place for an office was a public place, such as a café or bar where the board members met. Eleven associations out of thirty-two (11/32) organised their meetings in a public place. Additionally, the home of the association members was also mentioned as a place for their office (8/32). Beyond public places some of the immigrant associations had received premises for their association from the municipality (6/32) or from an umbrella association (4/32). Some associations had rented premises

from private enterprises (3/32), because it was uncommon for a voluntary association to be owner of own premises.

Most of the immigrant associations attempted to organise their activities in rented premises. The interviewees of ten immigrant associations mentioned that they had received premises from the municipalities. Some immigrant associations had problems getting premises because of a lack of information where to find a premise and with lack of knowledge of how to apply for subsidies and premises.

Table 5.1.3 Location of premises

Location of premises	For an office	For a meeting place
At the member's home	8	2
Premises from the municipality	6	12
Rented premises (private)	3	6
Premises from an umbrella association	4	8
Sport field, hall	0	3
Other (e.g. library, cafe, etc.)	11	4
* In total	32	35*

* One association may have several meeting places

Another problem that influenced immigrants' possibilities to become more organised is their scattered population. Members from the associations highlighted the need for geographical proximity. For example, Arabic women pointed that they cannot participate in activities which are not nearby their homes, due to having small children. A member of a women's association said that they have an idea of organising 'local divisions' for their members in Helsinki and Espoo. In this way, the participation of women would become easier without leaving their home and children for a long time. Furthermore, the member highlighted the difficulty of managing all the activities in one place with members who are scattered around the Helsinki metropolitan area.

Our idea was to have in East-Vantaa and East-Helsinki one group, each working separately. It is impossible to do it together; it was only in the beginning. It [the association] worked actively here. One week ago we started also in East-Helsinki.

Member of a mono-ethnic association, BD1

The data showed that municipalities tried to provide premises but the sharing of space between different immigrant associations was not always easy because in some parts of town, such as Eastern Helsinki or Espoo centre, there were more associations than in other parts (see also Saksela 2005). Furthermore, it turned out from the interviews that only a few immigrant associations were aware of the possibilities of organising their activities within the premises of municipalities. Societal and cultural activities were also organised in the premises of multicultural associations such as CAISA or the *International Association of Hakunila*. Smaller associations also organised their activities in the premises of umbrella associations. All three municipalities provided sports premises for organising activities and tried to provide subsidies for activities such as swimming courses for immigrant women.

5.2 Goals and Activity Forms of the Associations the Helsinki Metropolitan Area

The starting point for the analysis of this study is that it is possible to explore the significance of the associations for the immigrants by studying the associational pattern, i.e. the common features of immigrant associations. The first sub chapter outlines a typology of immigrant associations. It focuses on the goals described by the members of the associations and studies their function in the integrative process of immigrants into Finnish society. The second sub chapter describes the activity forms and their aims of them. These two sub chapters display the inclusive level of different types of associations, such as if they are oriented towards both the immigrants and Finnish society or if it is something else.

5.2.1 A Typological Division of Immigrant Associations

The majority of these associations have been established since the mid 1990s. I have divided the immigrant associations on the basis of their ethnic affiliation into mono- and multi-ethnic associations (see also Pyykkönen 2007b). Mono-ethnic associations refer to immigrant associations representing only one ethnic group, while multi-ethnic associations represent several kinds of ethnic groups. In some cases, the mono- and multi-ethnic associations belong to bigger coalition associations or “umbrella associations”. For example, ‘Somali League of Finland’ works as a coalition association for Somali associations established in Finland. Data collected from the thirty-two associations in the Helsinki metropolitan area showed that the number of mono- and multi-ethnic associations was fairly even. (See Table 5.2.1.a). These associations included also three coalition associations of which two were mono-ethnic associations (one Somali and one representing Russian speaking immigrants) and one was a multi-ethnic women’s association. During the data collection only a few coalition associations were found⁴².

A typological division can be useful in the examination of immigrant associations’ mobilisation of their ethnic group members and in the analysis of immigrant associations’ opportunities to participate and represent their members in Finnish society. I divided the immigrant associations into four categories: 1. societal, 2. ethno-cultural, 3. integrative and 4. transnational. Figure 5.2.1 should not be taken as a “strict measurement” of immigrant associations inclusion, but more as a tool for understanding the associations interests and also to a certain extent their opportunity of inclusion in Finnish

42 Since 2005, (after the time when the data collection was finished), several immigrant groups and associations have also recognised the need for ethnic convergence and have therefore established coalition associations (or unions/leagues) at regional level. In 2006 a multiethnic coalition for immigrant associations was established in Turku region: *SONDIP - The Union of Multicultural Associations* in South-West Finland (SONDIP). Six months later, *Heshu*, a multiethnic coalition was established in Tampere (Heshu, www.heshu.net). At the beginning of 2008, a coalition called *Wari* was established in Jyväskylä region. In the Helsinki metropolitan area, as well as in Joensuu, similar initiatives are taking place. A multicultural Finnish association, *Familiacub* has received financing from Finland’s Slot Machine Association for the establishment of a multiethnic coalition network in the Helsinki metropolitan area. This network aims to strengthen multicultural interaction and fight discrimination and racism in Finnish society. For further information see: Moniheli, (in Finnish).

society. The aim of a typological division is to try to get an idea of the level of inclusion of immigrant associations into Finnish society.

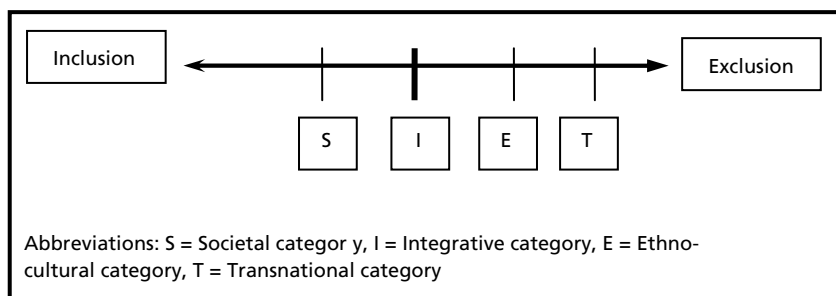


Figure 5.2.1 The level of inclusion/exclusion of immigrant associations in Finnish society

In the analysis of the data I categorised the immigrant associations according to the goals and activity forms described by the members. Table 5.2.1 shows the nature of the goals i.e. if the associations tend to direct their activities more towards Finnish society or towards their own ethnic group. The problem with the typology is that the associations have often several kinds of goals and these are not always clearly defined (see also Ahrne 1990:47).

The *societal category* refers to associations, whose goal was to incorporate the members of an ethnic group into Finnish society in general, such as into the educational system, the social and health care system and the labour market. The goal of the associations belonging to the *integrative category* was to create an interaction and equal participation between the immigrants and the majority population. The *ethno-cultural category* refers to associations, whose goal is to strengthen the collective ethnic identity and to maintain the faith and belief of an ethnic group (Baillet 2000, Cordero-Guzman 2005, Rex, Joly and Wilpert 1987). The need for activities focussing on the traditions of an ethnic group was emphasised in particular among immigrants who had children living between two cultures in Finland. The *transnational category* consists of immigrant associations, which on the one hand had the goal of improving the rights of refugees and immigrants living in the diaspora. On the other, this category refers to immigrant associations, which aimed to help the members'

countrymen still living in the country of origin by organising transnational activities. These activities refer to practices, which are based on sustainable contacts between the immigrant country and the country of origin (Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt 1999:219). For example, several of the transnational associations in this study aimed to improve the living conditions of women and children in the members' homeland. I describe the transnational contacts as reciprocal, enduring contacts created and maintained by members from the immigrant associations in Finland together with actors from the sending countries (e.g. members from local voluntary associations), for exchange of material as well as non-material means. Members of the associations or 'transmigrants' are the ones who produce forms of transnationalism (economic, political and socio-cultural) (see Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt 1999, Basch, Glick Schiller, Szanton 1995). It is common that the transnational associations have also a societal or integrative goal, (see also Chapter 6).

The Table 5.2.1 shows a division of immigrant associations in the Helsinki metropolitan area by mono- or multi-ethnic membership, typology, language spoken and by geographic location. Additionally it also describes the focus group (all, adults, youth/children or women). Slightly less half of the studied immigrant associations' belonged to the integrative category (I), fifteen of thirty-two (15/32). These associations had either only integrative goals "I" or had as their main goal, integration and as a secondary goal e.g. transnationalism "I/(T)". Eight associations of thirty-two (8/32) belonged to the ethno-cultural category, whereas six of thirty-two (6/32) belonged to the societal category. Three associations belonged to the transnational category (T) and one of these three had societal goals. The activity forms can be seen as an outcome of the defined goals and activities of the immigrant associations but that does not always need to be the case. Sometimes the activity forms were developed during the lifetime of the associations and its members' current interests. In other words, the most common category is the integrative one, but there are several associations that have a mixture of features from more than one category (see also Pyykkönen 2007b). To what extent one association was more "inclusive" or "exclusive" depended not only on the organised goals, but also on their activities, interests, strategies to recruit new members and their ability to take collective action (see also sub chapters 6.4 and 7.5).

Table 5.2.1 Immigrant associations in the Helsinki metropolitan area based on typology, focus group and language

Category	Mono-ethnic	Multi-ethnic	Focus group	Language	Municipality
E	X		All	Russian	Helsinki
E	X		All	Russian	Helsinki
E	X		All	Kurdish	Helsinki
E	X		All 1)	Creole, English	Helsinki
E	X		All	Turkish	Helsinki
E/(I)		X	All	Kurdish, Farsi	Helsinki
E/(I)		X	All	Arabic	Helsinki
E/(T)		X	All	Kurdish, Turkish	Helsinki
I		X	Adults	Spanish	Helsinki
I	X		All	Ingrian	Helsinki
I		X	Women	Somali, Amharic	Helsinki
I	X		All	Somali	Espoo
I	X		Women	Kurdish	Helsinki
I		X	All	Arabic, Finnish	Helsinki
I		X	All	Finnish, English	Helsinki
I		X	Children/ Youth	English	Helsinki
I	X		Women	Kurdish, English	Vantaa
I	X		Women	Somali	Helsinki
I		X	All	Finnish, English	Espoo
I		X	All	Finnish, English, Russian	Vantaa
I/(E)	X		All	Russian	Vantaa
I/(E)		X	All	Several	Vantaa
I/(T)	X		All	Somali	Helsinki
S		X	Adults	Several	Helsinki
S		X	Adults	Several	Espoo
S		X	All	Several	Espoo
S	X		Children/ Youth	Somali	Helsinki
S		X	Women	Finnish, English	Helsinki
S/(E)	X		Children/ Youth	Somali	Helsinki
T	X	(X)	All	Farsi, Arabic	Helsinki
T	X		Women	Somali	Helsinki
T/(S)	X		All	Kurdish	Helsinki
Abbreviations: S = Societal category, I = Integrative category, E = Ethno-cultural category, T = Transnational category					

Table 5.2.2 Collective activities organised by immigrant associations

Category	Type of activity	Aim of activity
Societal	Educational: e.g. computer and language courses and Finnish society seminars.	To incorporate the members of an ethnic group the receiving society.
Societal	Informative: To provide information of the health-care system and of the labour market, amongst others.	To incorporate the members of an ethnic group the receiving society.
Societal	Sport: Different kinds of sport activities, such as football, swimming courses.	To create interaction between ethnic groups, especially youth and Finns or to provide immigrant women with sport activities.
Societal	Social: get together event	Provide social contacts
Societal	Fight against violence: by counselling (hot-line), organising help for the victims of violence, seminars and courses	To improve the situation of immigrant women who are victims of (domestic) violence, (physical and/or mental).
Ethno-cultural	Cultural: art, drama, dance, etc.	To strengthen the collective ethnic identity
Ethno-cultural (and transnational)	Religious: praying, Koran school, religious events.	To maintain the faith and belief of an ethnic group.
Integrative	Consists both of societal and ethno-cultural activities	To incorporate the members of an ethnic group the receiving society and to strengthen the collective ethnic identity
Transnational (and societal)	Human rights: by informing the refugees and immigrants of their rights in seminars, newsletters, or by organising meetings with officers.	To improve the rights of refugees and immigrants living in diaspora as well as of the countrymen still living in the country of origin.
Transnational	Development projects: material remittances to the home-country (material and financial), maintenance of a school, orphanage.	To improve the living of women and children in the members' home-country.
Transnational, (and societal)	Political: seminars on Finnish local policies, demonstrations and sharing of news of politics from the home-country.	To organise opportunities for claims making.

5.2.2 Forms of activities

In the typology the associations were categorised into societal associations, integrative associations, ethno-cultural associations and transnational

associations. Sub chapter 5.1 showed that the main motivation for immigrants to establish and to participate in an immigrant association was to strengthen or maintain their ethnic identity or to be integrated into Finnish society. Still, there were differences between the associations' perception of what kind of societal activities they were interested in or what kind of cultural activities they organised.

The majority of the immigrant associations organised societal activities (23 out of 32 associations). These activities were main type of activity form for six associations (6/32). *Societal* immigrant associations organised activities which aimed to incorporate immigrants mainly into the socio-economic domain of the receiving society (see also Cordero-Guzmán 2005, Valtonen 1997). In this study, these activities consisted of educational, empowering and social activities. The educational ones were mainly language courses and computer courses organised by the immigrant associations, while empowering activities consisted of seminars and information on Finnish society. Other forms of societal activities were seminars on immigrant women's struggle against discrimination and violence. Some immigrant women's associations provided also counselling and help for victims of violence by organising counselling services and in some cases, a place for shelter.

Other activity forms were social activities with the aim to prevent the social exclusion of immigrants in their new surroundings. Different kinds of social activities could be also found in the other associational categories. According to the Chairs of immigrant associations, social togetherness was very important for their members and in several cases members from an ethnic group only joined the cultural and social 'get together' events. For some immigrant women, participation in events organised by immigrant associations was one of the few activities where they could attend because of having to take care for small children or their lack of language skills. Members of immigrant women's associations pointed out that for many women the first contact with their receiving society took place either through voluntary work or as a key person in the creation of their ethnic community in the receiving society. For example, an immigrant woman expressed her motivation to work more with immigrants in general, while she was looking for a more stable job:

Now I have lived here almost four years. I'm so active here! I have been working as immigrant affair worker for immigrant issues for Vantaa. I'm much together with women, Somali women, I organise also a gymnastic course and coffee and discussion group... Now I have been working with several kinds of jobs, such as assistant office work etc. In the beginning of next year I will look for a new education.

A member of a mono-ethnic association BD2

Additionally, sporting activities were an important part of the societal category. Several associations organised sporting activities for youth and women. For example, the *Helsinki International Sports Club* (HISC) organised football for youth and children of both immigrants and Finns and the *Multicultural Tennis Association* in Espoo also focused on all groups. Youth associations, such as *FC Vantaa Stars* and *FC Somali* organised sporting activities with the aim of improving the inclusion of youth into their own ethnic society, but also with friendship tournaments to improve the integration of youth from different backgrounds. Several immigrant women's associations also organised sporting activities. Muslim women were especially interested in participating in swimming courses. According to respondents from Somali associations, swimming is not a common activity among Muslim women and it is perceived (among men) as unsuitable for women. One reason for sports activities among immigrant (and Finnish) associations was the fairly well organised subsidy system. Immigrant associations focusing on sport could get subsidies from the Finnish Sport Federation (*Suomen Urheilu ja Liikunta ry.*), the Ministry of Education and from the social and health board of municipalities (Saksela 2003, 2005).

Out of thirty-two associations only eight belonged to the *ethno-cultural category* (8/32). This small number could be partly explained by the fact that this category only represents associations which only focused their activities on their own culture or ethno-specific activities, such as the celebration of holidays and the organisation of traditional music and art events. Another reason may had to do with the subsidies: two thirds of the thirty-two immigrant associations received subsidies for societal activities, such as sport,

educational courses and for organising seminars and work-shops about the Finnish society. Ministry of Education provided subsidies also for ethno-cultural activities. For example, the associations representing the Russian speaking immigrants and Somali (youth) associations have received subsidies for excursions and summer camps, amongst others (Interviewee 23a). These subsidies were granted mainly for organising courses in their native language for their children and for general maintenance of the associations (see also OPM). For example, some of the mono-ethnic immigrant women's associations received small grants of around 2000-3000 euros which were fairly small in comparison to bigger mono-ethnic associations or leagues, which have received between 18000-28000 euros (ibid). Naturally, the running costs could also be greater in associations with several hundred members.

Several ethno-cultural associations mentioned as their biggest problem to get financing for their activities. This can be one reason why only a few associations focus only on maintenance of ethnicity, identity and culture. It can also be interpreted as ignorance or a form of power used by decision making actors. Neither were any of these mono-ethnic associations included in advisory bodies or in integrative projects. The latter is understandable due to the ethno-cultural interest of the association. Still, at the beginning of this century, a more reasonable explanation is that neither small ethno-cultural associations nor local authorities knew where to look for contacts to each other. A lack of language skills is another problem, which is common often in small ethno-specific associations.

Several associations aimed to organise activities where their members had the opportunity to exchange news in their mother tongue, such as in the form of traditional parties or festivals. Mono-ethnic associations mobilised their ethnic group members by organising traditional events focusing on the members' culture and traditions. The members mentioned that ethno-cultural events were the most popular activities. Traditional festivities, such as religious traditions and New Year's parties also attracted attention from several non-members of the associations. For example, a Thai association used to organise their New Years party in the premises of the *International Culture Centre – Caisa*, but due to its success the association had to find bigger premises. The aim of cultural activities is not only "social togetherness"

but also to strengthen (or create) their collective ethnic identity among the immigrants, in particular among children and youth. The Chair of a mono-ethnic association emphasised how important it was to ‘represent their own culture’ or ‘organise cultural activities for children’ (Chair of a mono-ethnic association, CA1). Members of mono-ethnic associations find it important to teach the traditions and their own language to the children and youth. In this way they can strengthen their ethnic identity not only among themselves but also with the youth, who do not necessarily otherwise receive much information from their country of origin.

Another ethno-cultural form of activity is *religious practices*. During the immigrants’ settlement to the receiving society, religious practices can strengthen the collective identity among the members sharing the same religion (Baumann 2002, Martikainen 2006). The main objective of religious activities was to maintain the faith and belief of an ethnic group. For example, Koran schools and religious traditions such as Ramadan were common activities in immigrant associations where the members were Muslims. Activities based on belief were also common among Thais living in Finland. For example, the Finnish Thai association organised festivals related to the Buddhism, such as the Loy Krathong festival. The charting of religion was explored only as a form of activity and not as a separate association form. There has been studies conducted with a focus on the religion of immigrant groups and immigrant communities and their religious associations (see e.g. Martikainen 2004, Pyykkönen 2007b).

Almost half of the thirty-two immigrant association belonged to the integrative category (15/32) (see Table 5.2.1). This category consisted of associations, which aimed to focus their activities on strengthening their ethnic identity and on incorporating their members into Finnish society. The activity forms included activities from the two previous mentioned categories. Furthermore, I have included so called “multicultural” activities in this category. These are social and cultural activities organised by members from different cultural backgrounds for everybody (including the majority population). Some interviewees described their activities as ‘integrative’, which in practice, focus mainly on diverse kinds of societal services. Their remains a risk that, societal activities will get the character of integration, even

if these would not include the representation of the ethno-cultural activities of immigrants.

Although a common objective for several activity forms is integrative, it should be noted that several immigrant and refugee associations attempted to maintain their contacts to their home land by *transnational activities*. The transnational practices are significant in particular for persons living in diaspora (Griffith 2002, Pyykkönen 2003: 102-103, Wahlbeck 1999). Activities focussing on the country of origin can empower the members and prevent them from falling in depression (Griffith 2002: 167). People living in diaspora can re-experience practices through 'mode of change that accompanies the transnationalization of distinct social practices and institutions among migrants' (Vertovec 2004: 976).

According to the members of transnational associations, transnational activities consisted of political (exchange of news), economic (remittances in the form of financial or material support) societal (development projects) and cultural activities (exchange of material, such as books or organisation of transnational cultural festivals). The members from Kurdish and Somali women's associations pointed out that associational life has strengthened their self-image as 'support persons' both for their ethnic group members living in diaspora in Finland and to their countrymen ((Unpublished interviews from two mono-ethnic associations, BC1, BD1, BD1.2, BD 2.1).

Only very few immigrant associations organised any kind of political activities, despite the revision of the Association Act (L 503/1989), which has enabled immigrants to establish their own associations with political goals. One Kurdish association focused on the improvement of the human rights of their countrymen. They had organised seminars and demonstration in Finland, both for Kurds and Finns. A more regular – thus weak form of political transnational activity was the exchange of news related to political situation with members from local associations or friends. In other words, the immigrant associations' irregular political practices did not fulfil the definition of 'transnational activity', which are familiar for their regular nature (Portes et al. 1999:219).

It is common that the Kurdish associations also have connections to political parties in Kurdistan (Wahlbeck 2002). Some interviewees highlighted that they are tired of politics and do not want to have anything to do with

political parties, neither in Finland nor in their homeland. For example, some of the members of Kurdish associations in Finland had also been members of an association in Kurdistan. According to a former member 'it would have been impossible to organise activities without protection from a political party. Nobody would have taken them seriously and it would have been very dangerous' (Member of a mono-ethnic association, BD1). This association in Kurdistan was aware of the fact that their activities were framed by the political guidelines, but working without protection from a party would have potentially caused a very dangerous situation. The association would have been labelled as presenting political opposition.

Some of the transnational associations have received support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to organise development projects, such as the empowerment of women or the management of an orphans' school in cooperation with a local voluntary association. The co-ordination mainly took place through the internet and to some extent through telephone calls (Member of a mono-ethnic association, BD1). Not all transnational activities were organised by refugees living in the diaspora. For example, members from the Inkerikeskus, (an Ingrian association) collected clothes from Finland and sent them to Ingria where municipalities share them to the people in need.

5.3 Summary

The aim of this chapter has been to give an answer on how the organisational landscape of immigrant associations looks like. Features of the ethnic resource mobilisation approach, such as interests, resources and goals have guided the analysis of the data.

The majority of the immigrant associations have been established from the mid of 1990s. By the end of 2002, the data from the charting of immigrant associations in the fourteen biggest municipalities showed that there were in total 563 registered associations focusing on the interests of immigrants. These associations were established either by immigrants or by Finns. In total there were 221 immigrant associations established in the fourteen municipalities. The majority of the immigrant associations (127) were located in the Helsinki metropolitan area.

The inclusion of immigrants into Finnish society can be partly explained by studying their associational life. The motivation of establishing an association is on one hand, guided by private reasons, such as previous experiences of civic activities, position in the ethnic group and in Finnish society. On the other, the opportunities given by Finnish society, such as the associational laws, integration act and integration programme are all institutional features which promote the establishment of an association.

There appear not to be big differences in the structure of the associations. These are fairly small with some exceptions, such as some associations representing the Russian speaking immigrants and a coalition association for Somali associations. A majority of the associations complained of a lack of knowledge about how and where to apply for subsidies. Only few associations have members who can express themselves in Finnish in written form. Additionally, several members of the associations highlighted their interest in collaborating with Finnish voluntary associations, or with Finns in general. In other words, the associations have a problem with expanding their social capital. It is common that the coordination of activities and management of the associational tasks is done more or less by the same people. One reason for this is finding a time to suit all. Another reason is the problem of creating new contacts both within an ethnic group and beyond it. Nevertheless, there are differences in making contacts between the ethnic groups. For example, the Ingrain Russians and Somalis had a fairly expansive network of members in comparison to smaller ethnic groups, such as people from Latin America or from Arabic speaking countries. Some Latin Americans and Arabs had established their own associations based on language instead of nationality. In this way they got their ethnic language group mobilised at least in some of their activities (see also sub chapter 6.1).

The total data of this study consisted of thirty-two associations, which has been studied more closely, (data consisting of interviews, documents and in some cases also of notes based on observations). Fifteen associations were integrative, consisting of eight multi-ethnic associations and seven mono-ethnic associations. Six were societal consisting of four multi-ethnic and two mono-ethnic associations. Eight were ethno-cultural consisting of five

mono-ethnic and three multi-ethnic associations. Three associations were transnational consisting of mono-ethnic associations.

The typological division shows that a majority of the thirty-two represented immigrant associations had integrative activities and goals, even if the latter was not always the main goal. In other words the aims of integrative associations were reciprocal, focusing both on their ethnic culture and on Finnish society. There appears to be a connection with subsidy forms of activity types focussing on social services, such as: counselling, organisation of language and IT courses and diverse kinds of sporting activities. This does not mean that the ethno-specific activities would not get any kind of funding, but the emphases was mainly in societal activities. In practice the majority of the activity forms financed by external subsidy providers focussed on inclusion of immigrants into Finnish society and not so much on the maintenance of the ethnic culture of immigrant groups. This can have an assimilative effect in the end and can lead to a weaker ethnic identity among the immigrants. For example, the financed activities by the Ministry of Education consisted mainly of educational courses, such as of Finnish language⁴³ and computer courses. The Finland's Slot Machine Association was also an important subsidy provider. It financed seminars about the Finnish integration system amongst others. Social and sport boards of municipalities have financed sport activities.

43 The Finnish language courses (in general) were criticised by the immigrants of being too big and inefficient. For example, the size of the groups and on other hand the lack of more advanced levels caused problems with efficient learning.

6 From Mobilisation to Collective Action

Immigrant associations share some similarities in their organisation of associations, such as having problems with finding premises and subsidies. Much of immigrant associations' focus is on integrative activities, although several associations often aim to strengthen the ethnic identity of their members. Participation in an immigrant association is one way for immigrants to express their needs and interests in Finnish civil society. Immigrant associations can work as an access point for immigrants to the receiving society and as a bridge to their country of origin. The dual interests tell something of the settlement stage of the ethnic groups into Finland; their members are becoming familiar with Finnish society but have still strong contacts to their homeland. Several of the immigrants are also going through an "identity crisis" and are asking themselves 'who am I?'

The heterogeneity of immigrant groups partly explains the reason for existence for several mono- and multi-ethnic associations and the lack of one coalition association, which could unite the smaller associations. The diversity of immigrant associations in turn leads to different kinds of collective interests, organisational skills and forms of interaction inside and between the associations. To what extent immigrant associations are capable to mobilise their ethnic group members and to create collective action depends partly on the associational resources, the level of self-organisation and of the interest of its members.

This chapter discusses the organisational skills of eleven mono- and multi-ethnic immigrant associations and explores the associations' capacity to mobilise their members representing an ethnic, age or gender specific group. The mobilising effect of the associations is explored with the associations' ability to achieve collective action. In some cases it is also possible to see to what extent the associations provide tools for the immigrants to strengthen their ethnic identity.

The chosen associations for the description are based on the biggest language groups and on ethnic immigrant associations visible in the Helsinki metropolitan area (see also Appendix 8). In the description and analysis of the associations I have applied data mainly from the charting 'The role of immigrant associations in the integration of immigrants into Finnish society' (Saksela 2003). I also used data collected from immigrant women's associations in Finnish civil society. Additional data consists of the homepages, reports, booklets and notes made during the participant observations from associational activities.

6.1 Mono-ethnic Associations

This sub chapter describes four mono-ethnic associations: an Ingrian association, an association representing the Russian speaking immigrants, a Somali immigrant association and an association focusing on Somali youth. The core aim is to illustrate the organisational life of these four associations and to point out some of the difficulties that these associations face in their participation in Finnish civil society, such as how the members manage to coordinate the activities, mobilise members from their ethnic group and allocate resources.

This sub chapter explores the organisation of a possible collective action by members of each association. In other words, the objective is to study if the members of an immigrant association have any common goals or if the associational life is a collective action in itself. A mono-ethnic association's goal to strengthen the ethnic identity of immigrants is expressed very clearly in some activity forms, whereas in others it remains as a secondary goal.

6.1.1 The Inkerikeskus: An Ingrian association

There is the 'Suomi-Inkeri Seura' ['The Finnish Ingrian Society'⁴⁴]. There were three persons and they got into some conflicts. So, they decided to establish this one. It took place at 1995. --- The original idea was to establish an umbrella association for other Ingrian associations but

44 Free translation by the author.

somehow we became instead an association with members. --- at that point when they decided to establish this association there were more return migrants in Finland than had been prepared for. We found that this group needed support and help, in particular language teaching. Since the beginning, we have had as one of our goals education: Finnish language and IT-courses. We also organise in our premises courses focusing on empowerment and employment.

Activity coordinator, 23a

Establishment, goal and organisation

Since its beginning the goals of the *Inkerikeskus* association has been to support the inclusion of Ingrian return migrants to Finnish society and to strengthen the Ingrians ethnic identity. The association was established for Ingrian return migrants in 1995. The association organises Finnish language courses, which are financed by the Ministry of Education. The activities of the association are in line with the integration law, which underlines the importance of the integration process. This includes municipalities' cooperation with voluntary associations for organising educational courses, counselling and the maintenance of the ethnic culture of the group. Since its beginning, the association has focused on education.

The *Inkerikeskus* has a board consisting of eight members, beyond that there are 450 registered members of whom a majority speak Russian. According to the activity coordinator in the beginning there were around five active members, but due to the fact that it became a member based association with several kinds of activities it has attracted several hundred return migrants. The majority of the members are women. The board organises its meetings and activities in a building rented from a private enterprise. The *Inkerikeskus* do not have any members who are directly paid by the association, but it has employed four persons to work on projects.

The municipality of Helsinki has financed the premises of the association which has been rented from a private enterprise. The activity coordinator pointed out that the opportunity to have their "own" premises has enabled the organisation of different kinds of activities; everything from counselling hours to language courses and cultural events. The activities have been financed

mainly by Finland's *Slot Machine Association*. It has financed the Information and Crises Service, which is among the most important activities of the association. The Inkerikeskus has also received funding from the *Ministry of Education* and from the *Helsinki City Social Services Department*. Beyond subsidies, the association collects annual membership fees (10 euro and 5 euro from students and unemployed). A membership is not a requirement for participating in the activities organised by the association.

Activity forms

The Inkerikeskus organises mainly educational and empowering activities. On one hand the focus is on labour and education and on the other on mental well-being of the return migrants. The association have empowering courses consisting of Finnish language courses, IT-courses and taxi driver courses. These courses have been very popular and the migrants have also found them very useful.

S-B: What kind of activities do you have?

Interviewee A: We have a course for beginners in Finnish language, it's six months long, five hours each day and we have also a similar advanced course. --- It's aimed at people who are planning to start studying or to participate in the labour market. We educate them so that they get along in spoken Finnish and also to some extent in written Finnish. We have had pretty good results. We had fifteen students on our course and thirteen have found a job...And IT-courses! Well, now we don't know from where we can find financing. So far, we have taken part in AVOIN learning centre project. We had a teacher employed by them, but now we are looking for [financing] from different directions. The financing has always been a problem in associations. In one way or another we will try to continue the IT-courses. We have a very good teacher. ---

Interviewee 23a

Beyond the above mentioned activities the association organises several kinds of supportive activities, such as counselling hours for social and health problems and for employment, providing a support person between school

and families. Additionally, the association provides help for elderly return migrants. Members of the Inkerikeskus have recognised that the return migrants need help with mental problems. One of the members pointed out that their aim is to get a Russian speaking psychologist⁴⁵ and to organise art therapy courses (Interviewee 23b). Several of the return migrants suffer from a weak identity and low self-esteem. Therefore the counselling hours or the 'Information and Crises Service' is one of the most valuable services that the association can provide for their members. Mental problems are not only fairly common amongst adults but also amongst youth, in particular, the bullying of pupils with a migrant background, have become a serious problem (Interviewee 23b). Parents have complained that young people face cultural problems between the Finnish and Ingrian school system. Therefore the association has launched a so-called 'cooperation between school and home'⁴⁶ project, which aims to encourage parents to take part in the discussion of children's and youths' problems. This project also functions as a support tool between the youth and social workers. Furthermore, this association has a project aiming to help people who arrived in Finland before the Integration Law came into force in 1999.

---the aim of this project is to chart the families who have been left outside the integration law, i.e. those who came to Finland before the year 1999: What is their life situation? What kind of help do they need? And so forth. We try to support them in what ever there problems might be.

Interviewee 23b

The association has also recognised that older return migrants need help with participation in Finnish society. According to the members it is also important to take into consideration the ones who are weak and do not have the strength to claim for improvement of their living conditions, such as elderly migrants.

We have also applied financing for project focusing on old people, because there are several old people whom no one helps --- it has turned out that

45 Several of the return migrants from Ingria speak as their first language Russian.

46 Free translation from 'Koulun ja Kodin yhteistyö'.

they have also poor language skills. Normally, old people who have come to Finland as returnees have a fairly good Finnish skills, but then there are the ones who have come together with families and have been left alone. So we are looking for financing for this (project). This is a kind of grass-root level work. So, we would concretely help these people.

Interviewee 23a

At the end of 2004 the association got financing from the Social Service Board at the municipality of Helsinki to improve the inclusion of elderly return migrants who are at risk of becoming segregated from society in general.

The Inkerikeskus also organises cultural activities, although interviewees did not mention them as their core activities. The Ingrians participate in diverse kinds of music, art and drama activities, which are organised both for children and adults. Additionally, traditional parties, such as ‘winter party for the Ingrians’ and different kinds of seminars related to Ingrian culture are common activity forms. The events organised by Ingrian folk dance groups and choirs is one way to “enliven” the ethnic roots of the Ingrians. The lyrics of the songs and traditional patterns used in regional dresses have a symbolic value for Ingrian culture. The association also organises summer courses for children where they can get together with other children with an Ingrian background. (See also Inkerikeskus).

Cooperation

Since its beginning the association has cooperated with local authorities working with integrative issues and with civil servants at the national level. According to the interviewees from The Inkerikeskus one of their main cooperation partners is the Social Department of Helsinki City.

S-B: ... your cooperation with local authorities. With whom do you cooperate?

Interviewee A: With the Social Department of Helsinki City, their psychologist, with UVI⁴⁷ and KELA⁴⁸, because they don’t have any Russian speaking persons there.

47 UVI = Unit of Migration Affairs

48 KELA is the official abbreviation for ‘Kansaneläkelaitos’ or ‘**The Social Insurance Institution of Finland**’

Interviewee B: Well, the Ministry of Labour is coming here in January. We will discuss the improvement of communication in local living areas, but we don't know yet what it will include.

Interviewee A: We have cooperation, but not a single project.

Interviewees 23a and b

Despite the fact that Ministry of Labour did take the Ingrian association into consideration in their work on integrative issues there were no cooperation projects. This annoyed the members, because the association could not work without financing. The association also cooperated with the employment office and the Unit of Migration Affairs⁴⁹. The latter helped to organise a week long "information seminar" for the return migrants. The aim was to provide return migrants with information on how the Finnish social service system works and from where the immigrants can find guidance courses on the labour market and information on Finnish language courses (Interviewee 23a). These seminars have been organised mainly in Russian or in Estonian⁵⁰. According to the interviewees these seminars are not organised as frequently as in the mid 1990s. At the beginning of the 21st century the association organised an information seminar only every quarter due to the decreased migration of Ingrians to Finland. Beyond the above mentioned official partners the association also has contacts with the *Unit of Immigration Affairs* of Helsinki city (Interviewee 23a)

The Inkerikeskus is also represented by one of their board member in *ETNO – The Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations*. According to the interviewees, ETNO occasionally invites⁵¹ members from the association for their hearings, i.e. they ask the opinion of the members on current immigration issues (Interviewee 23a). According to the interviewee the members do not get enough information on the topics discussed in ETNO. This can be interpreted either as a lack of communication between the representative and the other members or as a sign of weak representation in the advisory board.

49 The 'Unit of Migration Affairs' belonged to 'Department of Foreigners' until the end of 2007. From 2008 its official name has been changed to 'Institution of Migration', Maahanmuuttovirasto or to 'Migri'. The 'Institution of Migration' functions within the frame of 'Ministry of Interior'.

50 Some of the Ingrians moved to Estonia during the time of Soviet Union.

51 The advisory board changed its organisation and function in 2005, see Chapter 8.

This association cooperates with other Ingrian associations both in Finland, Russia, Estonia and Sweden. For example, they have a cooperation project with an Ingrian association in Sweden for the maintenance of Ingrian culture in Estonia. The cooperation between the associations consists mainly of an exchange of information and of cultural visits (Interviewee 23a).

Collective interests guiding the association

By the end of 2002 there were forty Ingrian associations registered in Finland (Saksela 2003:252). The association described in this sub chapter is perhaps one of the most visible in the Helsinki metropolitan area, due to the fact that it focuses on the interests of the members and not on representation of other Ingrian associations in the form of a coalition association. Nevertheless, the mono-ethnic coalition association, *Suomen Inkeri Liitto*, has an important symbolic value as representing the collective ethnic identity of the Ingrians in Finland. It also organises an annual summer festival for its member associations amongst other things.

The Inkerikeskus illustrated above can be described as a bridge for return migrants to the Finnish society and at the same time a bridge to the “past”. The Ingrians who participate in the activities provided by the association go there for three reasons at least. Firstly, the Ingrians look for help in their integration into the Finnish education system and labour market. Secondly, some of the Ingrians or their family⁵² have mental problems – such as mixed feelings of identity – caused by the migration process. These migrants look for mental help in form of consultation and therapy courses from the association. Thirdly, the maintenance, or in some cases the recreation of their ethnic culture takes place through cultural activities, such as summer festivals and art courses. More often than not, the members (and non-members!) participate in several kinds of activities, which are based on the needs and interests of the Ingrian return migrants.

At the beginning the Inkerikeskus had less than ten members, but today there are more than four hundred. It illustrates the skills to organise activities and to manage their association. One reason for the associations’ success has

52 For example, children do not necessarily speak any Finnish but are counted as return migrants due to their family bonds to older Ingrian relatives, who are descendents of Finns.

to do with the fact that it had contacts with the municipality of Helsinki from the very beginning. It also received subsidies for the incorporation of Ingrian return migrants into Finnish society. Another reason is that the social and cultural activities provide venues for Ingrians to participate in Finnish (civil) society. At the same time the association provides an opportunity for the return migrants to strengthen their Ingrian culture. This association can be described as an 'integrative' association, due to the fact that it organises both societal and cultural activities. Nevertheless, the subsidies, which the association has received, are mainly for premises, IT-courses and for organising Finnish language courses. The members highlight that several official institutions do ask for their opinion, but do not take them as project partners. Apparently, there is a discrepancy in the definition of integration between the civil servants and the members of the association. The interviewees highlighted the two-sided view of equal importance of both cultures, whereas the perception of the civil servants focuses mainly on the inclusion of the immigrants into the labour market. In the long run, the latter interpretation may lead to assimilation instead of a two-way guided integration process.

6.1.2 Helsingin Venäläinen Sadko-klubi ry⁵³: A Russian speaking youth association

Our aim was to get the children and youth away from hanging around the streets, shopping centres and railway stations. We wanted to offer them something that could be of societal importance, such as recreational and cultural activities

Activity coordinator of the Sadko Club

Establishment, goals and organisation

In 1999, Russian speaking immigrants established an association for children and youth who were either Russian speaking Finnish citizens or immigrants from the former Soviet Union living in the Helsinki metropolitan area. Their

⁵³ The information is based on data collected for the charting of immigrant associations in Finland (Saksela 2003) and in an additional interview conducted with the activity coordinator for up-dating of information (Saksela-Bergholm 30.05.2008). Additionally, I found some information published on projects and subsidies on the internet.

aim was to strengthen the inclusion of Russian speaking children and youth into Finnish society and provide social and cultural activities for children by organising a so called afternoon club. Since 2002 until the beginning of 2008 the number of children participating in the activities has grown from 140 to 200.

The association *Helsingin Venäläinen Sadko-klubi*, abbreviated here as the *Sadko-club*, represents children and youth from the former Soviet Union. It is located in Helsinki. It has a board consisting of five members, a chair and an activity coordinator. The board goes through its activity agenda monthly. Four of the board members are also members of *Venäläinen Kulttuuridemokraattinen liitto – VKDL ry.* (a Russian cultural-democratic union, free translation), which is a Russian cultural association (interview with the activity coordinator, 30.05.2008). This association was established in 1945 by the Karelian evacuees. Today the VKDL association focuses on maintaining Russian identity among its members and to help the youth and children's associations as well as other smaller Russian associations (Interviewee 19). The inclusion of members from VKDL to the board of The Sadko-Club can be perceived as a strengthening resource for the association. The VKDL members' bring knowledge and experience of associational life and can help The Sadko-Club with the management of their association. VKDL has also empowered, together with the employment office, twenty long-term unemployed immigrants by providing work in their association. According to the activity coordinator some of them work also as cultural activity leaders in the Russian association for children and youth (interview with the activity coordinator, 30.05.2008). VKDL also provides the Sadko-Club office premises.

The Sadko-Club consists of nine employees including the activity coordinator. The majority of the employees receive their salary from project financing or in the form of an employment contract made with the employment office. The activity coordinator is paid for by the Employment and Development Centre. (Interviewee 19).

According to the activity coordinator, their association has managed to realise up to 90% of all their planned activities. This could also be seen by looking at the subsidies provided by regional, national and private funds,

which are published on the internet. The main subsidy provider is RAY or Finland's Slot Machine Association.

Activity forms

The core activity forms consist of social and cultural activities for children between four and twelve years of age and to another group between thirteen and sixteen. There has also been a discussion to organise activities for older youths and young adults. Finland's Slot Machine Association has financed a project for the integration of immigrant youth and children from the former Soviet Union. This project is realised in diverse cultural activity forms of which the most important is the afternoon club for pupils. This club includes several kinds of cultural activities consisting of language courses (Finnish, Russian and English), music, painting, dance and drama courses. The Sadko-Club is also popular for its summer camps, which it organises in the Helsinki metropolitan area (Interviewee 19).

The realisation of several different kinds of cultural activities for a couple of hundred children and youth can be interpreted as a result of good relations inside the Sadko-Club and with VKDL. According to the activity coordinator, the board members have a good knowledge of where to look for funding and good written and spoken Finnish skills (Interviewee 19). In particular, members' good writing skills have been valuable in the writing of applications to the Ministry of Education and to the cultural board of the City of Helsinki, amongst others.

Cooperation

The Sadko-Club cooperates mainly with VKDL, which provides help with the coordination of activities and project financing. The association also has a section in the VKDL newsletter *Spektr*, which is published ten times per annum. Additionally, the youth association gives information about its activities in their own newsletter, which is published every fourth month.

The activity coordinator highlighted as their strength the planning and realisation of cultural and social activities. According to him, the youth board of city of Helsinki has also expressed their gratitude for efficient youth activity management. The Sadko-Club has taken part in the Council of Europe's 'All

Different All Equal' campaign against racism and discrimination in 2006. This was coordinated by the *Finnish Youth cooperation Allianssi*. Unfortunately the campaign did not reach immigrant groups and their associations. According to the activity coordinator, their association represented the only immigration association which had actively taken part in the campaign despite Allianssi's effort to include other immigrant associations (Interviewee 19). In 2004, The Sadko-club took part in a project called *Art and Change* organised by *Humak – University of Applied Sciences*. The project focused on *an educational dimension of conflict resolution through the creation of cultural objects*. The project used a so called 'collective creation/story telling' method, which consisted of informal meetings with its Russian speaking members⁵⁴.

The Sadko-Club mainly contacts VKDL when they need help to organise cultural activities. Nevertheless, The Sadko uses the premises of *Caisa* and the cultural office *Stoa* in Eastern Helsinki for organising bigger cultural events. Collaboration with other immigrant associations, Finnish voluntary associations or official actors is fairly small (Interviewee 19).

Social group cohesion

The Sadko-Club can be perceived as an active and fairly well organised association. It has achieved its initial goals and over the years the number of Russian speaking children has increased. One reason for its success is its strong connection or alliance with the older Russian association, VKDL. The cultural and organisational management has been facilitated by the older association, who have a long experience of the Finnish third sector. Furthermore, several of its members speak and write Finnish, which is an advantage when applying for subsidies and when creating contacts with the majority population. Nevertheless, the association focuses mainly on the creation of social cohesion among Russian speaking children and youth. The activity coordinator pointed out that their aim is not to integrate the children into Finnish society but mainly to avoid marginalisation of Russian speaking youth into small groups without contact with Russian or Finnish culture (Interviewee 19).

54 For further information of the project see the internet site: *Art and Change*. <http://www.actandchange.eu/en/projects/helsinki/index.html>, (page visited 30.05.2008)

6.1.3 The Somali League of Finland⁵⁵

Establishment, goals and organisation

The Somalis do not represent a homogenous group instead it consists of diverse clans. This is one reason why there are more than forty registered associations in Finland (Saksela 2003). Some of the associations have ceased due to clan disputes. In the mid 1990s the local authorities recognised that it is more or less impossible to reach a large number of different associations. Therefore they suggested the establishment of a coalition association. By the end of 1996 a coalition association called *The Somali League of Finland* (abbreviated here as The Somali League) was established by Somalis in Helsinki. It was registered one year later. The goals of the association are defined on their homepage as follows:

--- [T] he aim is to develop the activities in a direction where the association can better serve its members and make the Somali culture familiar for the Finns. Fighting against attitudes and improvement of the relations between the immigrant and the Finns is also another aim of the association⁵⁶

(<http://www.somaliliitto.fi/>)

The Somali League consists of twenty-three mono-ethnic Somali associations (Rönkkö 2005). It has around 1500 members, due to the fact that all who speak Somali as their native language in Finland are included as members. According to the Chair there are around three hundred active members (Interviewee 8). The association has a council consisting of forty-five members. The members of the council meet every third month. They are nominated by the board members. The board consists of eleven members including a Chair, a Vice-Chair and a secretary. Members of the association elect a new board every second year. It consists mainly of men, but the Chair emphasised that they were planning to involve more women onto the board. According to the Chair

55 The information of this association is gathered during the charting of immigrant association in Finland (Saksela 2003), but it has been completed with additional information by an unpublished student work written by Ms. Katja Rönkkö in 2005.

56 Free translation by the author.

in Somalia the role of women in the official sphere has traditionally been visible. The association have three people who have received an employment contract from the employment office.

The Somali League has a small office premises in Helsinki city centre. It has been subsidised Ministry of Education. It organises bigger events in different premises in Eastern-Helsinki or at the International Culture Centre, Caisa. Eastern Helsinki is a suitable place for the association to organise its activities due to the high number of Somalis who live there. The main subsidy giver is the Ministry of Education for organising Finnish courses and IT courses. The association has also received financing through different projects. As a coalition association it is common that the activities are organised either by, or together with, its member associations and at their premises (Interviewee 8).

Activity forms

The Chair pointed out that the Somali League concentrates on organising societal services, such information, counselling, finding a job and organising of Finnish courses. So far the members of the association have not shown a big interest towards Finnish politics and also their political activities towards their home-country consist mainly of the sharing of news. Instead, the association focuses on educational and employment oriented activities, which are organised mainly for adults, but there are also societal and cultural activities for youth and children. Furthermore, the association takes into consideration the needs of Somali women by organising different kinds of empowering activities. A part of the association's activity forms goes beyond the Finnish context. The association has also cooperation with other Somali associations in other Nordic countries and in Somalia (Interviewee 8).

The key role of The Somali League can be described as providing information for the Somalis. The association has an 'information point' in their office premises from where Somalis can ask for advice about Finnish labour policy. The association has also organised a seminar on labour law. They have invited a lawyer to discuss the legal system. The (Finnish) lawyer gives council at the office once a week concerning questions related to legal issues. Sometimes they have a voluntary interpreter who can help with the translation. Somalis can also contact the association if they have faced racism or discrimination.

The Somali League tries to help the victims together with the Finnish League of Human Rights (see also Rönkkö 2005).

The members of the association also follow the political system both in Somalia and in Finland. For example, the association has contacts with private persons and voluntary associations in Somalia and receives news of the current socio-economic and political situation. Beyond the exchange of news, the association takes part in different kinds of developmental projects and has taken part in organising the Somali Peace Conference for rebuilding the country. The Somali League shares information of the current situation with Somalis in Finland in joint seminars organised with Finnish refugee and development associations. In Finland, the association has contacted members from the Social Democratic Party and from the Swedish People's Party. So far the members of the association do not have any common representative for Somalis, but the member highlighted that they are looking for somebody who could represent the common interests of the Somalis in Finland. Until now there are only two representatives for Somalis in Finland. The association has also organised seminars of the Finnish elections to its members. (Interviewee 8, Saksela 2003).

Beyond the above mentioned activity forms the association organises both social and cultural activities for children. The member associations organises for children cultural activities where they can learn Somali traditions and also the history of the country. One way to bring the Somali traditions closer to the children is by organising traditional parties, such as the celebration of Ramadan. Some of the member associations focus in particular on sporting activities. For example, the *FC Somali* association has organised football tournaments for Somali children from five municipalities from Southern Finland. Somali parents have also taken up the issue of the integration of youth. The association has organised seminars focusing on youth issues where both social workers and social scientists have taken part. (Interviewee 8, Saksela 2003).

The association also aims to improve the participation of Somali women. They have also organised IT-courses and Finnish language courses for women amongst other things. These courses were organised in the premises

of a member association. At the beginning of the 21st century the number of Somali women's associations increased in the Helsinki metropolitan area. Some of these associations are member associations of the The Somali League of Finland.

Cooperation

The association has a network of contacts both at local, national and transnational levels. At local level the core contacts are the *Helsinki City Immigration Unit*. The association has received help from them in the organisation of courses and information concerning employment. The association collaborates with the Human Rights League and with the Finnish Red Cross in cases where their members have faced racism and discrimination. Between the years 2003 to 2005 the Somali League took part in the *Majakka Beacon* project, which was coordinated by the *Rehabilitation Foundation* and financed by the European Social Fund. (This was part of the EQUAL programme). The aim of the project was to improve the access for finding a job. One of the common outcomes between the association and the Rehabilitation Foundation was the establishment of a Somali broadcast. This is a local broadcast in the Helsinki region and gives information twice a week about courses and seminars related to employment amongst other things. Another outcome of the project was a collection of labour experiences from Somalis working in the Finnish labour market. The stories were collected in a report, which was shared among Somalis, employment offices and different employees. (Interviewee 8, Saksela 2003, Annual report of the Somali League of Finland 2007)

The Somali League has recognised the need for information and news among the Somalis. The establishment of the radio broadcast has been realised through cooperation between the association and the *Majakka Beacon* project and has proved to be a valuable way to share information. The radio programmes focus on activities organised by the Somali League of Finland and on different kinds of empowerment activities, such as courses, employment advertisements etc. Beyond their own broadcast, the association also has a newsletter that comes out four times a year. According to the Chair the main sources of sharing information consist of the broadcast.

At the national level The Somali League has contacts with Ministries, members of Parliament, the Police and with the office of the Ombudsman for the Minorities. The association has also a representative at ETNO. The association planned to establish a working group together with the Ministry of the Interior to fight against racism and discrimination. The aim of the working group is to solve possible disputes between Finns and Somalis. They have also received financing from the Ministry of Education to organise IT and language courses. The association is also in contact with *Directorate of Immigration* (since the beginning of 2008: *Finnish Immigration Service*). The Chair pointed out that Somalis have complained of problems with the Directorate of Immigration, in particular for obtaining a passport or a visa. Normally the passport process should not take longer than three years, but there have been cases where some Somalis have waited for more than six years. Whatsmore, some of the members had experienced unequal treatment between those Somalis who had a Finnish citizenship and with those who had not. The Chair of the association complained that their members have found the client service by the Directorate of Immigration poor. For example, they had not been told at what stage they were in the passport process. It can be very frustrating to wait at home without knowing if it will take one or five years to get a passport. Another kind of problem had occurred with the Border Guard. According to the Chair of the Somali League some Somalis had complained that they had been treated by the guards in a discriminating way. The association had contacted the Ombudsman for Minority Affairs. As an outcome of the meeting the association was asked by the Institution of Border Control to organise an educational seminar for the guards. (See also Rönkkö 2005).

Finnish voluntary associations, such as the Finnish Red Cross, the Finland-Somali friendship association and the International Culture Centre – Caisa are all important partners in planning and organisation seminars or other events on Somali culture. For example, in 2003 the association organised with Finland-Somalia Association and World Health Organisation, a seminar of the current socio-economic conditions in Somalia. Caisa has offered premises for the association to organise bigger events and seminars. The

smaller events are normally organised in the premises of one of the member associations. According to the Chair the association mainly has contact with Finnish voluntary associations but fairly little contact with other immigrant associations. However they have cooperated with an association for Iranian and Iraqi people and an Ingrian association during the Majakka-Beacon project. (Interviewee 8, Saksela 2003, Annual report 2007).

Beyond the local and national contacts, the transnational contacts are also an important method to keep in touch with other Somalis living in the diaspora as well as Somalis in the members' homeland. The association has a development project together with Somali associations from Sweden and Norway to rebuild the country. The coalition association for Somalis also aims to support the re-establishment of a university in Somalia. Furthermore, its member association has also development projects which focus on the empowerment of women and youth, because these two groups are vulnerable to marginalisation. (Interviewee 8, Saksela 2003).

Collective interests guiding towards collective action

The association highlights the importance of the inclusion of Somalis into Finnish society and to make the Somali culture familiar to the Finns. The importance of mutual understanding of each others customs, traditions and how Finnish society functions is emphasised not only by the Chair of the association but also in their annual reports, homepage, radio programmes and in description of projects etc. There is a natural explanation for this: the cultural differences. In addition, the Somalis arrived to Finland as refugees and not as voluntary immigrants. Therefore, the coalition association focuses – almost exclusively – on the improvement of mutual interaction between the Somalis and the Finns. The smaller member associations however, have more specific interests focusing on certain groups, such as women or children, or on a common interest such as sports. The common collective goals can be described as 'supportive' and 'informative'. The former includes activities, which aim to help both Somalis living in Finland and in Somalia to find a place in their societies. The focus is more on Somalis living in Finland, but the transnational development projects are also fairly common, in particular among the member associations.

As earlier mentioned, the goal of the association is to create interaction between Finns and Somalis. For example, highlighted on their homepage is 'to familiarise Finns with the Somali culture', but so far, based on the information received, the focus has been mainly the authorities rather than the majority population. Additionally, the association encourages its members to join in and celebrate the Finnish holidays and become familiar with Finnish society and culture. The association has several informal and formal contacts at local, national and transnational levels. This umbrella association shares a common problem with other immigrant associations, namely the financing of projects. Despite the fairly large number of contacts, only a few of them have become project partners. One reason may be that this coalition association focuses more on representation of its member associations, which in turn organise more concrete projects.

6.1.4 Kanava ry: A Somali Youth association

Establishment, goals and organisation

Another kind of mono-ethnic Somali association is a fairly large youth association. The goal of the association is to integrate Somali youth into Finland. Somalis, and in particular youth, have faced problems with integration into Finnish society. Therefore this association aims to help youth to avoid becoming segregated and involved in crime and drugs.

The *Kanava* association⁵⁷ was registered in 1998 and has more than 300 members of which 200 are under twenty. According to the activity coordinator the association is open for youth with foreign background, but in practice the majority of the members have Somali background (Interviewee 14). The youth association is located in Helsinki where the majority of Somalis live. In comparison to several other immigrant associations they do have their own premises where they organise once a month their board meeting (consisting of seven members) and other tasks relating to administrative work. They also have four members who are employed staff one of whom belongs to a Somali sport association which collaborates with the youth association. Beyond the employed staff there are around thirty volunteers who participate

57 For further description of the *Kanava* association see the Master thesis of Kaikkonen (2003).

in the organisation of activities. Their main subsidy giver is *Finland's Slot Machine Association*, which has financed a project against discrimination and segregation and another for increasing the motivation for learning amongst the youth (Interviewee 14).

Activity forms

The *Kanava* association's activity forms reach from school to home and beyond. Both youth and local authorities can ask for counselling from the association. It provides information on education possibilities as well as on Somali culture. It is also possible to get a support person for youth who have problems in their life. Some of the youth are clients of the child welfare surveillance. Therefore cooperation between youth, social workers and parents is important. Another kind of problem is the use of drugs among youth. Members of the Somali youth association pointed out that it is crucial to organise campaigns against drugs and also share information both with youth and their parents. Members of the association have also recognised the problem of segregation among some youth. According to the Chair, the volunteers of the association take part in so called "street work" where they try to reach the youth who are hanging around and who have lost their motivation. The volunteers try to create contact with them and motivate them to continue their schooling. Another way to improve the integration of youth is through conciliation. For example, it is fairly common that the Somali youth have a different perception of Finnish society from their parents. In this case, Somalis needing help from an outsider can contact the association which has three educated conciliators. It also organises sporting and cultural activities for youth beyond the societal tasks related to problems. The Chair pointed out that their main tool for sharing information of their current events and activities is their website and e-mail. Additional tools for communication are telephone, booklets and pin boards.

Cooperation forms

This Somali youth association has several contacts both with other immigrant associations and local authorities. The association has also organised cultural activities with an African association in Vantaa. Other voluntary associations

consist of Finnish youth associations, such as *Allianssi ry*, *Parasta Lapsille ry*, and the *Finnish Red Cross*. They collaborate with the Institution for Migration (or the former Directorate of Immigration) concerning entrance and residence permissions. Other important contacts are the police, the labour office and social workers. (Interviewee 14).

Societal support and integrative efforts

The data showed that Kanava association has become a fairly visible and strong association in Helsinki for Somali youth. It can be described as a societal association focusing on the inclusion of youth into Finnish society. The activity forms are mainly societal, due to the fact that Somali youth face not only problems with their (ethnic) identity but also with inclusion into society. Therefore this association emphasises the strengthening of the identity of the youth who have lost their way and helps them with obstacles in cases where their parents or relatives cannot reach them. Kanava does not aim to mobilise Somali youth in general but in particular those ones who are in the risk of becoming marginalised from society. Each youth who can be saved from segregation, criminality or drug use can be described as the achievement of kind of collective action itself, because this is definitely collaboration between youth and adults.

6.1.5 Summary and discussion

It is fairly common that immigrants who have gone through the settlement experience in another country, or who know other immigrants who face problems with inclusion, have taken the initiative of establishing an association. In other words, the associational activities organised by the immigrants often started from concrete needs and the interests of immigrants who were in the integration process.

Members of the immigrant associations frequently used words, such as: 'been left outside', 'need of information', 'find a job' or 'fight against marginalisation' etc. These expressions were also used by the immigrants who contacted the immigrant associations. It is obvious that immigrants have lack of information about Finnish society and culture. Therefore, a majority of the immigrant

associations aim to organise activities, which could help immigrants to be included into Finnish society. These so called 'integrative' associations are important access for immigrants in Finnish society. Furthermore, by organising cultural activities, where the immigrants can express themselves in their native language, the associations provide an opportunity for immigrants to strengthen their ethnic identity. A problem related to ethnic identity is that several immigrants, in particular children and youth of second generation face the problem of "mixed identity". Therefore some associations provide help with mental problems in the form of therapy courses and counselling in the native language of the immigrants. The societal associations are also important by organising information services, Finnish language and IT courses for immigrants. Furthermore, these associations have often created contacts with local authorities, which work as an important asset in solving problems, such as residence permission, legal issues related to citizenship, the Finnish school system, child care and mixed marriage etc.

Immigrant associations are getting a firmer place among immigrants by providing both societal services and cultural activities. Those associations, which focus only on societal activities, can be described as service providers, not only for the immigrants but also for civil servants as well. In comparison to integrative associations, the societal associations have created contact networks with Finnish voluntary associations and civil servants. For example, The Somali League focuses on all age groups organises mainly societal activities and has therefore created several contacts at local, national and transnational level. The Somali youth association has also created contacts with civil servants. Cooperation with Finnish associations and civil servants are crucial for helping the youth to find their place between the Somali and Finnish culture. All four associations have also some kind of transnational contacts, either in the form of development projects or in the form of transnational activities focusing on the maintenance of the ethnic culture, such as the Ingrians.

The visibility of the four described immigrant associations in local or national multicultural advisory board remains somewhat unclear. Members of an Ingrian association expressed that they do not get enough much information

on the activities and issues which were dealt by ETNO (before 2005⁵⁸). Instead the members pointed out that civil servants ask for their opinions occasionally but do not ask them as project partners. The same problem also appears in the other associations. In general, a majority of the thirty-two interviewed associations mentioned as a weakness the lack of Finnish contacts, advice and financing. A common problem is not only how to fill in applications for financing but also how to find the right subsidy givers.

6.2 Multi-ethnic Associations

The two chosen multi-ethnic associations represent an association for Arabic-Finnish families and an association for immigrants from different ethnic groups. There is also one multi-ethnic association for African women and another multi-ethnic association for immigrant women in general. The immigrant women's associations are explored separately in sub chapter 6.3 where the aim is to analyse the associational organisation of immigrant women into associations and their achievements.

6.2.1 The Arabic-Finnish Families' association

Establishment, goals and organisation

Arabic-Finnish Families association was established in 1999. The reason for establishing an association for Arabic-Finnish families was to strengthen the contacts between the families, and at the same time to maintain the Arabic traditions and culture. The association strives to achieve the latter aim by organising cultural activities for children.

According to the Chair, the association has a firm structure consisting of a Chairman, a Vice-chair and a board consisting of seven members including a treasurer and secretary. The board does not include any women, although there are several women members of the association. Everyone who can speak Arabic or who are Arabs can apply to become a member. The Chair from the

58 The two first periods of ETNO or Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations selected its members based on language groups and not on the basis of associations, but during the 3rd period (05/2005-05/2007) there were some immigrant associations chosen as representatives, see also 7.2.2).

association pointed out that it is also recommended that people who intend to become members should be familiar with Arabic and Finnish manners. In the 2002 the association had eighteen families and by the end of 2007 the number had grown to forty-six families. The total number of registered members (adults) is ninety two, and including children (who are under fifteen) the number is 160. The majority of the members live in Helsinki (59 adults and 48 children); there are also several Arabic-Finnish families in Espoo (27 adults and 20 children) and four adults and two children in Vantaa. In addition the association has some members living in Lohja. The members pay an annual membership fee of 20 euros per family. (Interviewee 11, www.arabsu.org).

The Arabic-Finnish Families' Association doesn't have their own premises but it organises its monthly meetings either in cafés, the premises of the International Cultural Centre - Caisa or at someone's home (interviewee 11). According to the Chair, finding premises is one of their biggest problems. They had organised their meetings a few times in the premises of Helsinki City. Another provider of premises has been *Caisa* where the association has organised its meetings. The association has received funding from the City of Helsinki to organise IT courses. In 2002 the association was still looking for premises for the IT-course, and a few years later they obtained premises from the activity centre in Leppävaara, (in the municipality of Espoo) as well as from Caisa and from a cultural centre in Eastern Helsinki. The majority of the associations' activity forms are cultural and were organised without external subsidies.

Activity forms

The *Arabic-Finnish Families' Association* can be described as a combination of societal and cultural activities and classified as an integrative association. It organises discussion events of differences between cultures and family lives, teaches children Arabic and Arabic culture. The focus is on the multicultural identity of children and on the communication of the parents. The association strives to organise activities, which do not focus on political or religious ideologies. The secretary of the association pointed out that:

---we explicitly do not have any kind of political or religious activities, in the case there are conflicts during our discussion then we will interrupt it (Interviewee 11)

The association highlights that Arabic and Finnish celebrations are one of the most important activity forms of the association. During these cultural celebrations people can learn about each other and their culture. In these celebration parties the members prepare food together, organise games and music events for children. Among the most important celebrations is Fitr, which is the celebration of the end of Ramadan and other religious parties, such as Eid al Adha⁵⁹. The association also celebrates Finnish holidays such as: Easter, the 1st of May and Christmas Day. Beyond the cultural and societal celebrations, each year the association organises excursions for families to natural parks, the Zoo, etc. (See also www.arabsu.org).

The Chair pointed out that the main educational courses focus on children. The Arabic-Finnish Families' Association organises 'the Arabic language club', which also includes information on Arabic culture and Islam. This course has been organised in the premises of the Mosque in Helsinki and in the activity centre of Espoo. These courses have been fairly popular and have consisted of twenty to twenty five children. Members of the association search for books, videotapes, educational programmes from Arabic speaking countries and also from Sweden, due to the fact that there are a large number of Arabic speakers and they have a broad range of material in libraries. For adults there are seminars on issues related to mixed marriages, cultural differences and 'how to educate children between two cultures' etc. According to the Chair, the association does not provide any official consultation. In addition to the seminars the association also organises IT courses for its members.

The main tools for sharing information is "face to face", e-mails and by giving information about the activities on the website. The Arabic-Finnish Families' Association does not have much contact with other associations.

59 At the end of the Hajj (annual pilgrimage to Mecca), Muslims throughout the world celebrate the holiday of Eid al-Adha (*Festival of Sacrifice*). It has its origin in the Koran where the Prophet Abraham had to follow the command of Allah and kill his own son. (<http://islam.about.com/od/hajj/a/adha.htm>)

They have received some help from Islamic associations for organising celebrations or parties.

Creation of reciprocity as a form of collective action

In comparison to several other associations, Arabic-Finnish Families' Association does not organise activities with focus on the inclusion of its members into the labour market or to Finnish society. Instead, the emphasis is on the multicultural families.

One reason for the lack of cooperation with other associations or Finnish civil servants may be that the focus of the association is much on the private sphere, such as family issues, home and children. This association does not show any particular signs of "strategic mobilisation", such as claims making. Instead, it is more correct to discuss 'micro-level mobilisation', which has a focus on strengthening the contacts *within* Arabic-Finnish families. In other words, the aim of the mobilisation can be described as making the members aware of the existence of a multicultural identity and to show them that "mixed identity" can be a strength in a person's life.

It is a bit surprising that the association does not take up the gender roles anywhere in their activity reports. Still, it does not mean that gender roles would not be discussed in their informal get together events of the association. After all, the Finnish and Arabic gender roles are quite different. Whatsmore, the Chair highlighted that the association does not organise any political or religious activities, but the educational part aimed at the children does include education on Islam.

In Arabic-Finnish Families' Association the integrative interests take place mainly on the level of cultural interests. Apparently, the activities of the association have been fairly successful when the number of members has grown from thirty-two (in 2002) to ninety-two adults⁶⁰ (in 2008). (In the information from 2002, the children were not counted). Sometimes a few small activities can work as an efficient socialising tool to cross the cultural boundaries.

60 Additional up-dated data is based on annual reports of the association, (www.arabsu.org, page visited 19.03.2008)

6.2.2 The Hakunila International Organization

Establishment, goals and organisation

A multi-ethnic association was established in 1998 in Vantaa. It is called *The Hakunila International Organization* (Hakunilan kansainvälinen yhdistys in Finnish). This association emphasises on its homepage their aim 'to promote the awareness and knowledge of the different cultures and advance multicultural activities in the Finland' and as their 'aim for overall tolerance in Finland by applying preventive and antiracist policies' (www.hakunila.org). The association is known for its broad range of multicultural activities consisting of cultural events organised by different ethnic groups. Since the founding of the association, Somalis, immigrants from the former Soviet Union, Arabians and Kurds have all organised their cultural activities in its premises. The members of the Hakunila International Organization pointed out that the association has also an important societal function as a provider of regular counselling hours for immigrant living in Hakunila, Länsimäki and other areas of Vantaa.

The association consists of a Chairman and a board. In the annual general assembly members of the associations nominate eight to ten board members and as many substitutes. The members come from several different ethnic groups. The activity coordinator mentioned that the members from different associations are also responsible for the management of the activities of their own ethnic group. The idea is that each cultural group is in charge of their own activities, but they can occasionally collaborate with other groups.

Finland's Slot Machine Association is the main provider of subsidies for The Hakunila International Organization. This has made it possible for the association to maintain their association and premises, which are rented from the municipality of Vantaa. Several of the services and projects have been financed by the municipality of Vantaa and by Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Affairs and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (see also www.hakunila.org).

Activity forms

According to the activity coordinator one of the core objectives of The Hakunila International Organization is to provide a sphere for immigrants where they

can become familiar with Finnish culture as well as with the several foreign cultures represented by different immigrant groups and their associations. Another core objective of the association is to provide counselling hours twice a week in seven languages: *Finnish, English, Arabic, Turkish, Kurdish, Persian and Somali*. It is an open information centre for all kinds of issues that immigrants are interested in. According to the activity coordinator this idea came from Arabic immigrants who worked hard to get the idea of an information point realised. Today, the cultural association of Arabs is among the main partners of the multi-ethnic cultural association.

The members pointed out that the goal with several of their activity forms is to improve the integration of youth and the well-being of the elderly. These issues are discussed in the form of seminars and panel discussions amongst others. Cultural activity forms consist of different cultural evenings organised by different ethnic groups, such as the Burmese, Chinese, Spanish, German, Mexican and Russian. Often there is also an exhibition by an immigrant artist in the premises of the association. Other kinds of cultural events consist of international cooking courses, literature meetings and music from orchestras.

This multi-ethnic association has taken part in two larger cultural projects and in one campaign against drugs. One issue that is of great interest to the association is the improvement of multicultural relations and the fight against racism and discrimination. The association organises annually a peace forum for the relationship between Arabs and Jews. They invite scholars to discuss the relationship and well known artists to perform at the event. Some of the events are very popular and cannot be organised in the premises if the association. Therefore, some activities and events are organised in Caisa or in the cultural theatre *Savoy* in Helsinki. Another cultural project of the association was the Golden Ring project. Its aim was to improve a cultural exchange between artist from Russia and Finland. The multi-ethnic association has also taken part in an anti-drug campaign. During the campaign several multicultural and international events were organised (interviewee 26a).

The Hakunila International Organization does not have own newsletter, but informs about its activities on its homepage and during the events and

courses. In comparison to other immigrant associations this one has fairly firm contacts with the local authorities of Vantaa city and has members who can speak Finnish fluently. This makes the communication and application of resources much easier. The contact network also includes a wide range of contacts with other immigrant associations. Therefore, this multi-ethnic association plays both a supportive and meditative role between other immigrant groups, their associations and the local authorities. International contacts consist amongst several international networks and organisations, such as: ERAD – The European Refugee Advocacy Organisation which is supported by ECRE⁶¹, anti-racism networks such as UNITED and RASMUS (a national network) amongst others.

Presenting and re-presenting of culture

The above described immigrant association is a multi-ethnic association both in its structure (consisting of members from different ethnic groups) and by its activity forms (offers opportunities for immigrant groups to represent their culture). Still, it would be wrong to classify it as a “cultural association”, because it also has strong societal interests, such as helping immigrants in their daily life by providing counselling and by organising societal seminars and panel discussions, such as social services provided by Vantaa municipality and a seminar on security in the local area of the immigrants. This association has become a visible and central place for several immigrants living in the area due to its efficient and diverse cultural programmes. It mobilises immigrants from different ethnic groups, but mainly in an indirect form, such as joint organisation of cultural activities together with representatives of other immigrant associations and members from different ethnic groups. The goal of The Hakunila International Organization is to create awareness amongst the majority population of the cultures of ethnic minority groups and immigrants and to increase tolerance. These projects and campaigns can be perceived as a kind of collective action for the achievement of the goals of associations.

61 ECRE is the abbreviation for European Council on Refugee and Exiles, UNITED stands for European network against nationalism, racism, fascism and in support of migrants and refugees. RASMUS is a national network that consists of actors who oppose racism and xenophobia and promote multiculturalism and human rights.

6.2.3 Summary and discussion

The representation of culture can take different shapes, such as in the form of dual representation of “two cultures” or as a meeting place for “cultural mixture”. The latter is probably a more familiar definition of a multi-ethnic association than the former. Still, the Arabic-Finnish association shows how a dialogue between two different cultures can create a sphere of multicultural dialogue. The members attempt to create and strengthen the interaction between families of two cultures. This association focuses mainly on cultural activities representing both Arabic and Finnish cultures. In other words, this association is an integrative association, although it does not follow the general integrative pattern. It does organise some educational courses for children, but these focus on the Arabic culture and Islam. The societal activities such as counselling or other societal services are not emphasised. Instead, the sharing of information and discussion of cultural differences takes place in a fairly informal way, such as during get-together events and during celebration of holidays.

During the last few years the number of member families has increased without any bigger recruitment efforts by the association. This can partly be explained by the good social contacts of its members. There appears to be a good micro-level organisation without any bigger interest in formal contacts. This can also be seen in the lack of formal contacts with civil servants. As a weakness of the organisational process of this association, it can be said that it remains remote and somewhat unknown for the majority population. On the other hand, this can also be its strength; the members can create trust and friendship contacts with the children by focusing on social contacts between the families. This can strengthen the creation of a dual ethnic identity for the children. In other words, the Arabic-Finnish association is based on the social capital of its members and emphasises the importance of a dual identity. The fact that the association organises more Arabic orientated activities than Finnish ones, has to do with the members’ daily contact with Finnish society.

What about members with an Arabic background who do not take part in the labour market (or education)? Is it possible that this kind of association

can work more as a marginalising association than integrative? Marriage to a Finn does not automatically provide a key into Finnish society and culture. Individual motivation to learn Finnish and an interest to participate in civil society and the labour market is partly up to the person her/himself. The answer could be found from the Arabic-Finnish families, which are most likely quite diverse. At least this association does provide interaction for people living in similar life situations. The Arabic cultural activities provide a venue for some members for the traditions and memories from the homeland, while for the children, associational participation can work as a bridge to their parents' home-country. The celebration of Finnish holidays is an important strengthening tool in the cultural dialogue. Despite the association not having networks with other immigrant associations or local authorities it has managed to activate several other Arabic-Finns in the Helsinki metropolitan area. The importance of strong or weak contacts has much to do with associational goals. In this case strong contacts work as an efficient tool for creating interaction between the families. Sometimes strong contacts can work as a more efficient tool than "weak contacts".

The organisational process of the Hakunila International Organization is more or less the opposite of the Arabic-Finnish association. It consists of representatives for immigrant associations and of members from different immigrant groups living in Vantaa. The strength of this association is that it provides both cultural/social activities and societal services. It has created an extensive network of contacts both at local and national level. This association has a fairly even division of informal and formal contacts, due to its broad range of activities. Networking is definitely one of this associations "tool of management" for its activities and organisational structure. The member associations also have a representative on their board, which has an important role as decision maker in the associations' activities. Each ethno-specific association or group of immigrants is in charge of the coordination and carrying out of their events. Sometimes it's entirely organised by the members of the association and other times by its members associations.

This association does not call itself a coalition association because it also has several immigrant members who do not represent any particular association or group. Instead, what is a common feature for its members is that a majority

of them come from the same area, which represents one of the most densely foreign populated areas of Vantaa. The association has also taken this into consideration in their organisation of seminars and activities. For example, they have activities which focus on elderly people who can easily access the association. Another group are children. Several of the activities focus on all, both old and young.

The activity coordinator pointed out that their aim is to improve multicultural relations. This association also works as a meeting place for immigrants from different cultures and they can learn about each others cultures by participating in the cultural events. The strength of this association is that it works as a platform for multicultural dialogue, but as its weakness is the lack of cooperation with majority population. This is a common problem, not only in immigrant associational life; Finns who participate in multicultural activities do this because it is related to their work or they have close family or friendships with immigrants. Spontaneous interaction between foreigners and Finns remains weak.

6.3 Immigrant Women's Associations

Since the end of the 1990s immigrant women have also started to establish their own ethnic associations. Motives for establishing their own association have come from an interest in empowering women of the same ethnic group or immigrant women in general. The following sub chapter illustrates five different kinds of immigrant women's associations. Below is a description of three mono-ethnic women's associations: two Somali associations and one for Kurdish immigrant women. It will be followed by a description of three multi-ethnic women's association; one aimed at all ethnic groups, another for women from Middle East and by a third focusing on the empowerment of African immigrant women in Finland.

6.3.1 *Golis Naisten Yhdistys: A Somali women's association*

The primary concern of the Golis Women's Association is to develop innovative ways and means to promote the incisive social inclusion of

immigrant women in Finland, whose employment and every day coping is hindered by cultural and language barriers as well as health and social matters. A lot of gratitude and appreciation goes to the Finnish government, which has come a long way in establishing policies and programmes to address the needs of the targeted group, taking into consideration the devastation and hardship they have come through due to either natural disasters or civil wars in their home countries. However, we believe that much a higher commitment of resources and effective guidance is required.

From the website of Golis Naisten Yhdistys
(<http://kotiweb.kotiportti.fi/golis/eng.htm>)

Establishment, goals and organisation

This quotation from the associations' website illustrates the positive attitude towards civil servants, although with a wish of a somewhat bigger input. The Golis women's association (abbreviated here as the Golis association, in Finnish Golis Naisten Yhdistys) is open to all immigrant women, but in practice the majority of the members are Somalian and their transnational activities are also between Finland and Somalia. The goals of the association are to integrate immigrant women into Finnish society by providing educational courses, sports activities, counselling on the labour market, women's rights and information about the Finnish health care system, amongst others.

--- I think that the first Somali women's association was established in 1998 or -97. After that several men said that women could not establish an association, (but) it is only the men who can establish the association here in Finland. But these are of no use to women because women need other women for help and work here in Finland as well as elsewhere. In other words women need each other.

The Chair of the association

The above mentioned quotation shows the motivation and need to establish an association for immigrant women. The Chair and some of the board members were educated within the field of social work and found it natural

to establish an association focusing on immigrant women's integration into Finnish society. Their refugee background from the civil war in Somalia has made them aware of the need to help their homeland. Since 1998, the Golis association has actively organised activities both for immigrant and refugee women in Finland and for women and children in Somalia.

The Golis association was registered in 2000 and today has a board consisting of a Chair and three other members. According to the Chair there are approximately fourteen Somali women who normally participate once or twice a week in their activities, but it is common that several non-members participate in their bigger events when the number of women increases to forty-five or fifty. One of the association's problems is the scattered location of their members. Therefore, they have had difficulties finding a common meeting place, neither have they received financing for an office. Normally, the members get together in a Koran school or at someone's home in Vantaa or Helsinki. One of their plans is to organise smaller divisions and work in the future as a network because they have members in Vantaa, Helsinki and Espoo. The Chair pointed out that the management of activities would be much easier if they would have their own premises and would get some help from Finnish volunteers.

But we also need Finns who could guide us. We also try to get a place or an office, if we have a place then we can apply for projects and women can feel doing work: A place for a trainee. Yes, there are lots of things still missing! We try to develop, because there are women all over needing help.

The Chair of association, 27

Activity forms

Since its establishment the Golis association has had cooperation with *Monika – Multicultural Women's association* in Helsinki. This association focuses mainly on helping immigrant women who have faced mental and, or physical violence. The members of the Golis association provide counselling and contact *Monica-naiset* association in cases where they are unable to solve problems themselves (see also 6.3.4). Since 2003, the Golis association has taken part in the *International Women's Day*. For example, it organised a

concert jointly with the *Hakunila International Organisation* where Somali women performed in their national dresses. This Golis association organises also weekly meetings in the form of gatherings in the Koran school, swimming courses and aerobics. They have received financing to organise sports activities and for a trainer.

One popular activity form is summer camps for the immigrant women. According to the Chair these have been very popular, despite the fact that the association did not manage to get financing for it in 2005. In cases where their association has been left out of financing the members of the Golis association have tried to find other summer camps for Somali women. These summer camps have been organised by Finnish volunteer associations or the municipalities in the Helsinki metropolitan area.

Cooperation

One of the main activity forms of the Golis association is the maintenance of a school orphanage in Hargeisa, Somalia. The school is also aimed at children who have lost one of their parents in the war. The Golis association collaborates with Ministry of Education and a voluntary association, the *Shifa* in Somalia. They also have a steering group consisting of their members and of teachers and volunteers in Somalia. They are in frequent contact with each other by e-mail and phone. Additionally, one of the Golis association's members aims to visit the orphanage annually. The Somali volunteer association – the *Shifa* focuses on health counselling for children and adults. The Golis and the *Shifa* associations also aim to organise teaching for illiterate women, but due to the lack of resources it has only been possible to provide teaching organised by volunteers. Instead, they have received subsidies for the teaching.

The nature of the activities, such as swimming and language courses have required collaboration with Finnish volunteers and with non-governmental organisations, such as the *Finnish Red Cross* or *The Martha organization*⁶². The association has also taken part in three projects coordinated by the municipality of Vantaa, namely: *Urban*, *Join* and *Vasama* project. Urban was

62 'The Martha organization is a Finnish home economics organisation, which was founded in 1899 to promote the quality and standard of life in the home. It also carries out cultural and civic education.' (For further information see Martat, http://www.martat.fi/in_english/).

a *Community Initiative Programme* coordinated by Helsinki and Vantaa and its objectives were to support multiculturalism and improve employment in the neighbourhood areas of the cities, amongst other things. Joint Promotion of Anti-discrimination was part of the EU financed *Community Action Programme to Combat Discrimination* (2000/750/EY). In Vantaa the focus was on improvement of collaboration between police and immigrants and on education and health care issues. The Vasama project was a European Social Fund funded project coordinated by City of Vantaa in 2002-2003. Its objective was to empower immigrants through education and employment. The local authorities also contacted immigrant associations of which the Golis association was one.⁶³

Collective action in form of empowerment

Since its establishment in 1998 the Golis association has worked actively. The Chair of the association was nominated in 2005 as the Refugee Woman of the year. She was nominated for the title in particular for her support and work for refugees and elderly immigrants living in the Helsinki metropolitan area. According to her there are plenty of issues which should be improved for the immigrant women in Finland. For example, there are elderly Somalis who have not learned Finnish and are fairly isolated in their homes. She emphasises the need to educate more support for the elderly. Another problem is the lack of Finnish language courses for refugees and immigrants who came to Finland before the integration law came into force. She pointed out that it is not only awareness of the right kinds of activities but also the knowledge of planning and coordinating activities, which is often missing from immigrant associations:

--- But we have also plenty of issues which we would like to improve here in Finland. There are so many issues of immigrant women's needs. For example, 'how women could do voluntary work'. --- And how to cooperate with other Finnish voluntary and immigrant associations. I have collected or received information from Lähiöasema of all kinds of

63 For further information of the three programmes visit: URBAN <http://www.urbanfinland.info/Resource.phx/urban-eng/mainpage.htx.html> and Yhdenvertaisuus <http://www.yhdenvertaisuus.fi/>.

associations, not only immigrant women's associations. But there are also immigrant associations. And we learn to know each other. Our aim is to make some kind of cooperation.

Interviewee 27

This association has created a large network of associations and local authorities working with immigrant issues. In the future it remains to be seen if the Somali women's association will become more focused on development work or on integration of immigrant women.

6.3.2 Ziwar: A Kurdish immigrant women's association

Establishment, goals and organisation

The Ziwar association was established in 2000 and was registered two years later. The goals of this association are to share information about Finnish society to the Kurdish women and to improve their participation in it. Before the establishment of the associations the Chair had taken part in a multicultural project organised by a multi-ethnic cultural association in Vantaa. She was surprised that immigrant women continued contacting her even after the project was finished. Finally, she decided to establish an association for women together with another Kurdish woman. They decided to organise activities which could empower immigrant women to participate in activities outside their homes and also provide guidance relating to the labour market. Beyond these goals, this Kurdish association focuses on the improvement of immigrant women's living conditions who have been victims of violence.

One of the association's goals has been to create networks with other immigrant women's associations and with Finnish voluntary associations. By the end of 2005, this association had achieved the creation of a network of immigrant women's associations together with two other associations (see also 6.3.5).

The Ziwar association receives new members by sharing information in the form of booklets in different events and places. The association have fifty seven registered members in Finland and some beyond. They do not have their own premises but they aim to meet once a month in the premises of the multi-

ethnic cultural association in Vantaa (see 6.2.2) or at someone's home. They have received funding from the Ministry of Justice for organising counselling and support services in the native language of the immigrant women (Kurdish and in some cases in Farsi and in Persian). This association focuses mainly on juridical issues of crime processes. In 2005 they organised two information and education events. Additionally, the members produced material about crime processes, restraining orders and booklets on marriage in the above mentioned languages (and in Finnish) on their homepage. Additional financial resources consist mainly of a membership fee, which is 10 euros.

Activity forms

The Kurdish women's association aims to empower immigrant women through social activities, such as handicraft courses. They took part in a joint project together with *The Finnish Associations for Adults Education Centres* (KTOL)⁶⁴. In the KTOL booklet the importance of multicultural handicraft project is described as:

*The handicraft work is important in particular in the integration of immigrant women and in prevention of their segregation. Immigrant women bring diverse kinds of handicraft skills with them of which Finns have little knowledge. Still, the skills which immigrant women have learned in their home-country could work as a key into a meaningful activity form in their new home-country and in best case to their employment. It could be possible to get in the circle of interaction also older and/or women without reading or writing skills.*⁶⁵

Multicultural handicraft project 2003-2005, KTOL

The Chair of the association had worked as a weaver in her homeland. Today, the association has financing from the Ministry of Education for organising a handicraft course for women in Iraq⁶⁶. This is done together with Kurdish women living in Northern Iraq. The aim of the project is to empower women living there. The association's vision is to start a transnational business with

64 KTOL = Kansalais- ja työväen opistojen liitto.

65 Free translation by the author.

66 (This is not the home-country of the Chair).

a Finnish cloth factory that could send their clothes to Iraq where women could sew them. The association also has contact with a Kurdish immigrant women's association in Sweden. These two associations mainly exchange news and ideas.

The Ziwar association also provides help and information about the Finnish social and health care system for Kurdish women. The most common reason for women to contact the Ziwar association is that they have had a misunderstanding with the local authorities who are in charge of social services. The women do not complain so much over their financial situation, but over the incomprehensible bureaucratic language used by the authorities. According to the activity coordinator it is common that the social workers make a decision without finding out of the real nature of the case. Other common issues where help is needed relates to topics dealt in the labour office, *the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (KELA)* and children's day care. Beyond this kind of counselling, the association has also organised a Finnish language and IT course for immigrant women.

This Kurdish women's association also has an important role as support provider for victims of mental or physical violence. The members pointed out that their association helps one or two immigrant women with societal and mental problems more or less weekly. These matters were often related to oppression or physical violence from the partner. There had also been a few cases where the members had provided a temporary shelter for immigrant women who had been in danger of serious violence. Today, this association also cooperates with a Finnish shelter from where the women can find help:

We cooperate with a shelter and an Adult Education Centre. The shelter helps us with accountancy and helps the women who cannot anymore stay at home. Several Kurdish women find it difficult to leave to a shelter. They try to stay as long as possible in their home or they try to get their husband to leave their home. Sometimes I have had to explain to them that their situation is very dangerous and that they must leave their home. Then, there are cases where the husband comes and asks for apology and then it all starts from the beginning.

Interviewee, 26

Contacts and cooperation

Ziwar has created its own network of immigrant women, mainly consisting of Kurdish and Persian women who contact them when they face a problem. Furthermore, this association also coordinates a transnational development project in Iraq for women. The Chair pointed out that their aim is both to empower immigrant women living in Finland and in Southern Kurdistan. Mental and physical violence is apparently a problem which this association has taken very seriously. So far, they have created contacts with other immigrant women's associations, who also have the same goals. The members mentioned that the lack of fluency in Finnish is also a problem for the members in their writing of subsidy applications.

The data showed that contacts with other immigrant women's associations, and the collaboration with KTOL, have provided the Ziwar association with a good platform to strengthen its opportunities to become a strong association in Finnish society. Another reason for the fairly successful organisation of activities is their focus on societal and development projects for women. Still, this association lacks visibility in the Helsinki metropolitan area and has to compete for financial resources with bigger immigrant associations.

Fight against violence and oppression of women

It would be important to discuss also with men, but it's very difficult. The women often want that men discuss with men of their issues and women with other women of their issues. I have also suggested that men should have an own support person. One man became interested and came to talk to me. He told that he doesn't know any other way then beating in cases when he has a dispute with his wife. He asked me how he could learn to behave in another way. In his home his father had always hit his mother if she disagreed of something. --- The idea to organise support persons for men has been rejected by Kurds, because they – both men and women – do not want that someone else knows about their things. In some cases it is still possible for them to share their private issues with another person, but if there are several people then no. For example, some Kurds want to discuss only with other Kurds, and then again, there are those who only speak to members outside their community.

Interviewee 26

The issues of honour and shame were often emphasised, not only during the interview with the Chair of this association, but also with other Kurds. According to the Chair, 'there is nothing more painful than to get divorced'. It also explains why the members of the association tried to make the Kurdish women aware of their rights in and about respect for women in Finland. Still, the biggest problem often remains in getting the women out of their home, due to the fear of causing shame for their family if they left their husband and children⁶⁷. The Chair expressed with some sarcasm: 'A good wife is one who is quiet and don't say against. The man makes the decisions. But silence is not always good! She has the right to get divorced'.

6.3.3 The Iraqi Women's Association

At first we wanted to present our culture but later on we changed our aims. We thought that there were so many cases of women having to deal with violence. Then we wanted to help them in their lives and to get integrated into this society because if they have so much violence --- then they can't go to work, learn Finnish or get integrated to this society.

Interviewee 1.2

Establishment, goals and organisation

By the end of 1996 two active Kurdish women⁶⁸ decided to establish an association for women coming from the Middle East. They had recognised immigrant women's interest in participating in social and cultural activities. The Chair of the association pointed out that the problem for many (immigrant) women is that they do not have many social contacts. In the beginning the goals of the association was mainly cultural and social focusing on togetherness and

67 Normally, it is possible for the women to take their children with them to a shelter.

68 This association has been established by women who organised associational activities in Iraq. In Iraq their aim was to improve women's position and fight against violence and struggle for emancipation. Their association belonged under the protection of a political party, because it was impossible to organise any kind of associational activities without a permission or protection of a political party. Today, according to the Chair of the association, they do not have activities with any associations in Kurdistan Iraq, although several of the members have private contacts. Some members of this association participate in the activities of another refugee association, which is politically active in Finland and has transnational political contacts with their home-land.

on the organisation of cultural events, such as excursions, traditional parties with music, traditional dishes and dance from the Middle East. In time the goals of the association took a new form: Kurdish women who participated in the activities pointed out their need of finding a job, to learn Finnish and to become included into Finnish society. In other words, the association started to provide counselling and information of social services (education, health-care and employment). At the beginning of 2000, the members recognised that there was a growing need for several women to get help with physical and mental problems. According to the Chair many Kurdish women are facing a dilemma, which is to find their place between the traditional and modern lifestyle. It is not uncommon that women become victims of violence in their home. This often related to the “honour” of the husband or brother. The members said that in March 2005 a young Kurdish woman was killed by her boyfriend. The killing of the woman had been the main reason why the Iraqi Women’s Association increased its activities focussing on the counselling of women who have faced violence.

The majority of the members are Kurds from Iraq with a few exceptions. Still, it would be wrong to classify this association as “Kurdish” when the members aim to take into consideration the tradition and culture of the women coming from other parts of the Middle East. *Iraqi Women’s Association* is located in Helsinki and has rented its premises from the municipality of Helsinki. It organises a monthly board meeting, consisting of five members. Beyond that it organises annual meetings for its members. By the end of 2005 the association had around seventy five members of which a dozen are active members. Iraqi Women’s Association also keep contact with other Kurds in other parts of Finland and beyond. The Social Department of Helsinki has provided a Finnish volunteer for the association a couple of times. Her help has been very useful in the writing of applications. The association has also received subsidies from the *Ministry of Education* for a newsletter and from The Finnish Refugee Council and from the *Social Democratic Party* for organising seminars about Finnish society and women’s rights. The *Board of Social Affairs* of Helsinki has also given a subsidy to organise swimming courses for immigrant women. The City of Helsinki has provided premises for

this association and three other immigrant associations. The chair pointed out that they have problems finding subsidies partly due to the lack of sufficient written Finnish and partly due to the lack of information as to where they could apply for financing.

Our big problem is that we don't have anyone who could provide information to us. Before we used to have here one Tiina⁶⁹, but now she has retired. She always told us what a good project is for immigrant women. Even if we would know a project we do not have anybody who could write an application. Yes, it is a difficult thing. For example, we are five but nobody who could write. Before 'Education and Development Centre' used to help us, but now we don't have anyone. The City of Helsinki hasn't employed anyone.

Chair of the association

Activity forms

According to the Chair the Iraqi Women's Association focuses mainly on the integration of immigrant women into Finnish society. It organises both cultural and social activities and provides societal services. The association organises seminars on women's rights and on health issues. Additionally, it organises educational courses, such as swimming and language courses for its members. In 2005, the association redirected its activities, in particular on the sharing of information for women who had faced either mental or physical violence. The Chair pointed out that the problem of violence against Kurdish women shaped its form radically at the beginning of 2005.

According to the Chair an intensive discussion started among the Kurdish women about the rights and protection of Kurdish women in Finnish society after that a Kurdish woman had been killed by her previous boyfriend in March 2005. First, in the form of informal meetings, but later in May 2005 the associations received financing for a seminar from the Ministry of Education. After the incident, some of the members and a member from an association representing Iraqi and Iranian refugees visited the Human Rights group of the Parliament.

69 Name changed

We discussed about two issues: The position of Iraqi women should be improved in Finnish society --- The Finnish society has to do something if we want to support and help them to get out from their home. This integration process should be easier for them. Another issue is that they should go to school, to Finnish courses and what so more we should support their empowerment.

Chair of the association

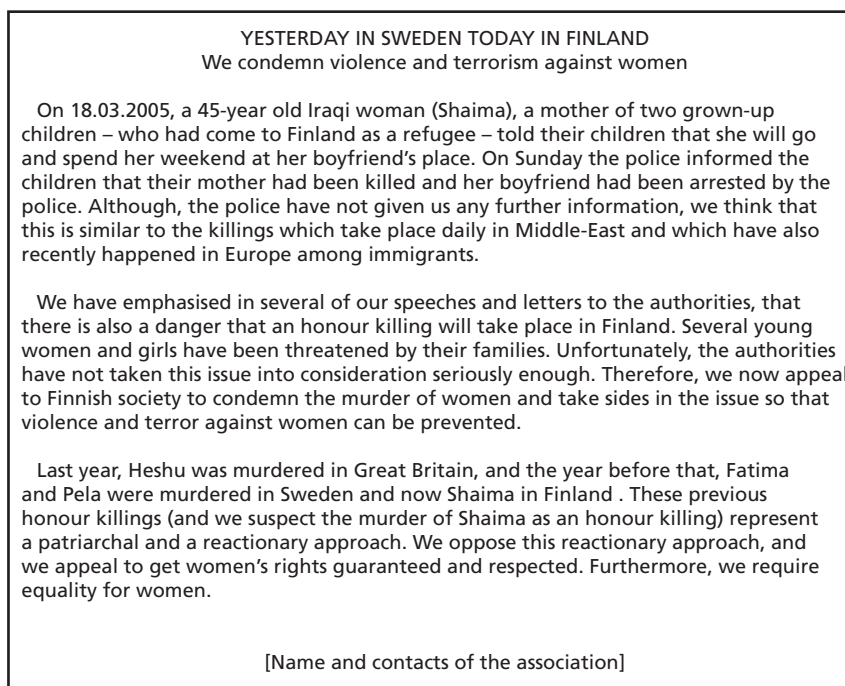


Figure 6.3.3 A letter to the editor⁷⁰

Iraqi Women's Association also attempted to share information of the incident by sending a letter to the editors of several newspapers, but none of them published it. According to the Chair, they received a reply from a national newspaper stating that "this is not their policy". Figure 6.3.3 is a free translation into English of the letter to the editor.

⁷⁰ Free translation by the author.

The seminar 'Immigrant women and Violence' consisted of members of Finnish voluntary associations, politicians and of the Chair of a multi-ethnic women's association. Speeches were made by: *Demarinaiset* ("Social Democratic Women in Finland"), the *Finnish League for Human Rights*, *The Mannerheim League for Child Welfare*, *Kriisikeskus* ("Crisis Centre"), a human rights activist and by a member of the human rights group from Parliament. The aim of the seminar was to raise awareness of the problem of violence against immigrant women both for the majority population and for immigrant women. Despite the seminar being well organised it remained unclear for me in what way the policy makers had become more aware of the existing problem of honour violence that in some cases may turn into an honour killing. So far, the issue appears to be too sensitive to be taken up as a political issue.

Contacts in Finland and beyond

Iraqi Women's Association started to cooperate with a multi-ethnic immigrant women's associations in 2005, (see also 6.3.5). The 'Immigrant women and Violence' seminar was their first joint activity and cooperation has continued since then. In cases where a Kurdish woman cannot stay at home anymore due to domestic violence the Kurdish association guides the woman to the multi-cultural women's association who have a shelter (Interviewee 1:2). Consultation provision and organisation of help together with social workers and in some cases the police are the main tools for the association to help women who have faced violence.

In Finland, Iraqi Women's Association has also some contacts with other immigrant associations. For example, after the violence against women seminar the Iraqi Women's Association started cooperate with Monika-Naiset (see 6.3.4), which became an important partner for the association. Another collaboration partner is *Laurea University of Applied Sciences*, with whom they have written a guidebook of 'Finnish Family Life' for immigrant women, which also includes information about (immigrant) women's rights (Interviewee 1:2). The association planned to translate it from English to Kurdish and send it to the Finnish Embassy in Ankara. The report focused on women's rights in Finland and how a woman who faces violence in her family can find help.

This association organise also cultural and social events for immigrant women. For example, they have organised together with *Demarinaiset* and an association for Russian speaking members a Women's Day event in Lahti. According to the Chair of the association, the event was very successful; there were around 120 immigrants who took part in the seminar and in social activities organised at the Women's day. On the same day, the association also organised in cooperation with a Kurdish association, social and cultural events in Vantaa. Around thirty women attended and listened to speeches about the position of immigrant women in Finland and to watch a dance performance. (Interviewee 1:4).

Iraqi Women's Association also has contacts with a Swedish coalition association for immigrant women and with some Kurdish associations in England. The Chair was participating in an international seminar in Sweden when she received the news concerning the Kurdish woman who was killed in Finland. It was a core issue at the seminar and as an outcome this association promised to organise a seminar concerning this topic.

From get-together to active mobilisation

Iraqi Women's Association shows how the interests and problems of immigrant women have taken a more concrete form connecting with a larger discussion of ethnicity, gender and violence. The association started modestly from cultural and social activities today and has reached a network of immigrant women of which a majority are Kurds in Finland.

The Iraqi Women's Association is still creating its network with formal institutions and Finnish voluntary associations. The first step towards a more stable and visible place as a societal support provider has been their cooperation with another multi-ethnic immigrant women's association.

In the future it remains to be seen if this association can remain as an integrative association, i.e. providing both ethno-specific activities and societal services or if it will, in the long run, become a service provider for immigrants.

6.3.4 Monika – Naiset Liitto: A Multi-ethnic Immigrant Women's League

The goal of our association is to get together women from different cultures for information and education. This will make it easier to get integrated into Finland and to get some all-round education. Not so much about carrying on their own culture, but in particular project activities where the focus is on prevention of violence. It all started from there. --- In the establishment we were four persons – for us, the number of members is not so important but to promote the principles. Now, when we have member based associations so there are around six-hundred, but it doesn't mean anything --- the important thing is the context and how we act.

The activity coordinator of the association

Establishment, goals and organisation

According to the activity coordinator of the *Monika-Naiset Liitto*, (here abbreviated as the *Monika-Naiset*) the timing was good for the establishment of an immigrant women's association against violence in 1998. She pointed out that little discussion took place on the issue of violence against women in Finland in the 1990's. This can be partly explained by slow worldwide progress in acknowledging that violence against woman is not a private issue but a violation of human rights. It was not until 1993 when the *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women* took place⁷¹.

In the association's booklet it is highlighted: 'Violence against women is a serious societal problem going beyond cultures. Violence is a crime. It insults human rights and hinders equality and integration of becoming true. Beyond violence in relationships, it can take shape as honour violence, forced marriages, female genital mutilation, discrimination and racist violence. Women and girls who have moved to Finland may have experienced violence not only in their own families, but also in refugee camps, war, during conflicts

71 The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action were adopted at the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna from June 14–25, 1993. For a further discussion of the mobilisation of movements on women's rights see Weldon's article on: Inclusion, Solidarity, and Social Movements: The Global Movement against Gender Violence by in *Perspectives on Politics*, March 2006, 4 (1):55-74.

or because of their religion⁷².

The Monika-Naiset can be described as a multicultural women's association which also works as a coalition association for fourteen other immigrant women's associations. The association in Helsinki is firmly established, but today it provides help together with its partner associations and other contacts all over the country. It consists of a board of six to eight members and of thirteen active people working on different projects. Some of them are members of the associated members associations. At the beginning, the association had two places of activity: one focusing on counselling, information, courses and seminars, and the other focused on peer support for immigrant women living in Eastern Helsinki. After a couple of years the need for support and information grew among the immigrant women; the association started to receive more contacts from immigrant women living outside the Helsinki metropolitan area. Therefore, the association established peer support centres with some its member associations and Finnish voluntary associations in the regions of Turku and Kemi-Rovaniemi.

Activity forms

Officially, the Monika-Naiset is defined as a producer of societal services within the framework of the Social Services of Helsinki City. According to the activity coordinator, this was the official way of getting permission to organise societal services for immigrant women. In other words, although this association is a voluntary and non-profit making association it is regarded by civil servants as a "service producer". The members do not get any financing or support for their association as such, but receive financing from *Finland's Slot Machine Association*. They have received financing for three projects which consist of an empowerment centre (in the premises of the association), support for immigrant women and for a shelter.

The empowerment centre offers a "hotline" for counselling, language help and the training of volunteer workers and peer support. The association provides counselling in: English, Estonian, Finnish, Kurdish, Persian, Russian, Swedish, Tagalog (or Filipino) and Thai amongst other languages. The activity

72 Free translation by the author of the association's information booklet.

coordinator pointed out that 35% of their clients have lived in Finland for several years and still cannot speak any Finnish. Therefore, they have a circle of support people who they can contact and ask for help with translation. Additionally, this association exchanges information and organises courses both for local authorities and Finnish voluntary associations who work with related issues.

Contacts

Since the beginning of the association the best way of sharing information has been through face-to-face contacts. The coordinator for a peer support group pointed out that formal venues, such as the office of social services or social workers are not as efficient information providers as the immigrant women themselves who have faced violence. According to their 2004 annual report, the number of contacts with clients grew from 232 in 2002 to 648 in 2004. A majority of the victims of violence are women between thirty-five and forty-four years of age (49 % of the clients). The growing numbers of victims can be interpreted either as improved information on the activities of the association and, or as a more serious form of violence against immigrant women.

Monika-Naiset has a very broad network of formal contacts, consisting of local authorities, such as social workers, the police and the *Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health* and the *Ministry of Justice, National Council for Crime Prevention*. During the data collection period⁷³ the association did not belong to the *Advisory Board for Ethnic Affairs - ETNO*, but they were chosen, together with several other immigrant associations to ETNO for the third period; 05/2005-05/2007. The association also has contacts with several voluntary associations in Finland, such as *The Finnish Association for Mental Health, Finnish League for Human Rights, National Women's Line in Finland* and the *Probation Foundation in Finland* amongst others. These are all valuable contacts in their work related to violence against immigrant women.

At the international level, the main contacts are with two immigrant women's associations in Sweden: National Federation of *International*

73 The data of immigrant women's associations was collected from 10/2002 to 03/2005.

Collective action in form of empowerment

The strength of Monika-Naiset can be described as its large network consisting of authorities and immigrant women's associations and of its clients. So far, several women have received help and information on how to get out of a physically or mentally violent relationship. The activity coordinator mentions as their main achievements: the association's possibility to influence societal issues, such as the improvement of living-conditions of immigrant women, providing them with tools to control their own lives and to activate and empower the immigrant women in general.

This multicultural immigrant women's association has gained a lot of visibility in Finnish society through its societal projects. Its members have organised several information seminars and educational courses on how to become a support person amongst other things. As a weakness, she mentioned that the organisational life in Finland is fairly conservative and it is difficult for immigrant associations to win the trust of the Finnish private sector actors who could work as potential subsidy donors.

6.3.5 Africarewo: An Association for African Women

The establishment, goals and organisation

The *Africarewo* association was established in Helsinki in 2000 and registered one year later. The association is still fairly small and has around ten active members, as well as a Chair and one secretary. The members are mainly from three African countries (Somalia, Ghana and Nigeria). Occasionally, some Finns have taken part in the activities of the association. The natural choice for the common language is English, although on some occasions Finnish has also been used. *Africarewo* does not have its own premises, but has organised its meetings in the premises of the *Finnish Red Cross* and in *Caixa*. The association organises a general assembly twice a year and occasionally organises smaller meetings. The financing of the organisations is based mainly on a membership fee of twenty euros.

The goal of this multi-ethnic African women's association is to empower African women living in Finland and in African countries. The goals of empowerment are to help immigrant women to find a job and to provide information of social and health care issues. Additional goals of this association are to provide help and counselling for women who have faced physical or mental violence or oppression. In the long run the aim of the association is to improve the opportunity of its members to find a permanent job. Several of its members are women with an education in the field of social and health care.

Activity forms

The Africarewo associations organise its activities mainly through three types of projects. The first one is an information packet on legal issues for immigrant women. It provides information on different Finnish local authorities and institutions from where an immigrant woman can ask for help in cases where she has faced domestic violence, problems with residence ship, the aliens act or with other types of legal obstacles. This is financed by the Ministry of Justice. The second consists of educational seminars concerned with the sharing of information and interaction between Finnish and the different immigrant cultures. The aim of these seminars is to increase the knowledge of different cultures and to reduce racism and this has received subsidies from the *Ministry of Education*. The third project is a development project in Somalia, which started in 2005. The Africarewo association started to plan with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs an empowerment project for uneducated and unemployed women in Somalia. They received financing from the ministry from 2006 to 2007. This project started in 2004 with a Finnish multi-cultural voluntary association and with a Somali development organisation. In the first year the African women's association was in charge of the project coordination and in the latter year the Finnish association took care of the coordination. During the first year the associations established an activity centre in Mogadishu. There, Somali women could learn reading and writing as well as mathematics. The aim of the project was to give an opportunity to the women to become small scale entrepreneurs. Several of these women were orphans or widows and marginalised from the local community.

Contacts and collaboration

Private contacts play an important role in the maintenance and development of further contacts. In 2002-2003 the recruitment of new members worked mainly through the sharing of information at events and parties, and at gatherings organised by the Lutheran Evangelical Church. Later on in 2005, the association created an extensive network of contacts consisting of immigrant associations, Finnish voluntary associations and local authorities. One reason for this is that the Chair of the association actively took part in the municipality policies.

At the local level the association has had contacts with one Latin American association and one Turkish association. Their members took part in the same Finnish course, which were organised by a Finnish NGO Consortium in Helsinki. Today their most important immigrant association partners consist of a multicultural association in Vantaa and a network of immigrant women's association with whom they have joint projects. This association has also had contacts with *Helsinki Polytechnic Stadia*, *Humak - University of Applied Science* and *Helsinki Deaconess Institute* relating to their improvement of their services on social and health care issues. The association is also a member of an international women's association in Sweden, *Internationella Kvinnoförbundet* which aims to increase the interaction of immigrant women's networks and associations by virtual activities amongst others. At transnational level the main project partner is the previously described association in Somalia.

The Africarewo association has also created a network of immigrant women's association with two other associations. According to the Chair of the "African" women's association, the aim of the network was to empower immigrant women in Finland. During the data collection in 2005, I participated in one of their seminars, which did not give a very clear picture of the aims of the network (see also Figure 6.3.5). Fortunately, my fear for their failure proved wrong; at the end of 2005 the network applied for subsidies from the Ministry of Justice to organise support, help and counselling in their native language. The idea of the project was to provide mutual support based partly on immigrant women's own experiences. Furthermore, their aim was to fight against the oppression of women and to fight against human trafficking.

Later on the association received a grant of 15,500 euros from the Ministry of Justice for the year 2006. The network focuses in particular on immigrant women living in the regions of Forssa, Helsinki, Oulu and Turku. This project is coordinated by the African association. Below is a description of a seminar which was organised by this network of immigrant women's associations.

Notes from a seminar⁷⁴, May 25th Helsinki

*A seminar for improvement of women's position in Finnish society
At the end of May I participated in a seminar for 'women's education and planning'. It was organised by three immigrant women's associations together with a Finnish women's association in Helsinki⁷⁵. The aim of the seminar was to discuss: What can women's associations do for the improvement of equality and women's position in Finnish society and what kind of cooperation is needed? This seminar took place on the premises of 'The Finnish Centre for Pensions' in Helsinki. There were around fifteen participants and a majority of them were immigrant women. Only a few authorities and members of Finnish women's associations were present.*

The seminar was divided into two formal parts consisting of speeches and workshops. The first part consisted of a speech made by an employee from 'The Finnish Centre for Pensions'. She discussed the possibilities for immigrant women to have old age pension insurance, also for women without Finnish citizenship. It was followed by a speech from a member of the Finnish women's association. She spoke mainly of the mobilisation of Finnish women into associations. Unfortunately, she neither focused on their current activity forms nor on possible collaboration with immigrant women's associations. The Chairs of the three immigrant women's associations also briefly presented their own associations.

After the coffee break, the participants were divided into three workshops. The aim was to discuss about cooperation between immigrant women's associations; to outline their common interests and to discuss the financing of joint activities. In the joint discussion each workshop coordinator presented the main points. They highlighted the need to organise more information for immigrant women concerning Finnish society, such as women's rights and courses for the improvement of immigrants' reading skills. The participants wished that there would be more immigrants working with immigration issues, such as in shelters for immigrant women or as a director for immigration issues. The women also expressed an interest to participate in first-aid courses and their need to find more meeting places for women. Furthermore, the problem of getting subsidies for associational activities was emphasised. A participant pointed out 'it is difficult for foreigners to get financing for their projects. Normally, a subsidy is given only to projects, which are coordinated by Finns. Sometimes Finns take foreigners as partners in their project application, but when they receive the money than they will keep it all to themselves'.

I recognised that the representation of civil servants and members from Finnish women's associations was more or less non-existent. For example, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health had only sent a trainee from their equality unit to the seminar. The lack of civil servants could partly explain why this seminar appeared to be more as a "think-tank" meeting for further cooperation instead of a concrete planning seminar.

Figure 6.3.5 Notes from a seminar

74 The original notes were five pages long. Here, I have translated and summarised only the essential parts into English.

75 I represented myself as a PhD Student from the University of Helsinki, but I decided to keep a fairly neutral role. I.e. I mainly listened, made notes and asked few questions to immigrant women, who were members of associations during the workshops and coffee break.

6.3.6 Summary and discussion

Social contacts in the form of informal networks and immigrant associations can work as important supportive resources for immigrant women. Through their informal networks and associations, immigrant women can offer information both to the majority population and to their own ethnic groups. This kind of cultural 'boundary crossing' can create new social forms in the local living areas and support the inclusion of immigrant women into the receiving society (see also Ålund 1991). Associational activities amongst immigrant women, as well as their participation in other municipal activities are an effective way to highlight the current interests and needs of the women in their ethnic communities.

The collective action organised by each association, either separately or in the form of networking, can be described as the 'empowerment of immigrant women', as one member expressed it: *'it's a great achievement (for the association) when the woman has control over her own life'* (Interviewee, 25). As the quotation above shows, associational action is an ongoing process to improve immigrant women's life in general. Naturally, it is possible to talk about small 'action repertoires', represented by each woman who come with a problem in the association and leaves it with a solution. Still, the core of the immigrant women's associational life is to mobilise the women who have been for one reason or another, isolated from society.

The description of the five immigrant women's associations shows how immigrant women in the Helsinki metropolitan area had started to organise themselves into their own associations by the end of the 1990's. The character of the associations is mainly integrative, although some of these focus on societal interests and some of the associations focus on transnational interests. Common to all five associations is their goal of empowering immigrant women. The definition of empowerment was interpreted differently by the associations, although they shared a common interest to make the women active which can include providing opportunities for immigrant women to find a job or to receive an education. Another important issue is to help women who have been victims of physical or mental violence.

The societal services consist mainly of counselling of social and health issues, providing educational courses (language and IT-courses), seminars (information on violence against women, Finnish society and legal issues). All associations, except one immigrant women's association, organise social and cultural activities, such as get-together events, excursions to other cities, to museums or to the nature. Associational organisation of small local events, such as discussion evenings has proven to be very important for several immigrant women. In particular, social togetherness is an important integrative source for those women with small children who do not take part in the labour market and don't speak any Finnish. Several interviewees continually repeated how *lonely* these women were. As a member of Women of Iraq and Iran said: *Shaima did not speak any Finnish, she had only one friend Elisa⁷⁶, who had asked her: why don't you join our get-together evenings? We discuss different issues and we are happy here in Finland. She (Shaima) promised to come but then this happened. She got killed.*

Three of the five associations organise support and help for women who are victims of violence. According to the activity coordinator of one immigrant women's association (6.3.4) the number of contacts had more than doubled in two years (between 2002 and 2004). One reason could be better information about the association, while another reason may be increased violence in immigrant or mixed relationships. Whatever the reason, one thing is sure: the threshold is always high for women who are victims of violence to ask for help from an outsider. One member, who provides peer support explained:

Then there are cases where the woman go and report an offence and they [the police] will just not take this seriously and they comment: 'You have to manage your own relationship and we will just make unnecessary work; there is no point in making a charge' --- and I feel so sad about this, because it is a high threshold for women to go to an authority and ask for help. There's no way that these women would again go and ask help from the authorities!

(Interviewee WA2).

76 Name changed.

In particular, women who come from the Middle East or from cultures with patriarchal values, feel often ashamed of leaving their home even if their life is in danger. In several patriarchal cultures, there is no bigger shame than a divorce. Furthermore, the honour of a family is lost if a woman (daughter, sister or wife) who is suspected of having an affair outside her family is not punished. Sometimes gossip can lead to the killing of a woman. Nevertheless, Finland is known as one of the most violent countries and only since the 1990's has violence against women become regarded as a violation of human rights. This may explain but it is no excuse for ignorance by police.

The first contact for these so called "clients" is often the tip of the iceberg. According to members of immigrant women's association, it is normal that when these women feel somewhat more relaxed and safe then they start to talk about their other mental and societal problems. The members pointed out that the "paperwork" as such does not take such a long time, but the therapy or appointments with a support person can take much longer; normally between six and thirty-six months, and the mental recovery from violence can take years.

Transnational projects – all except one (the orphan school) – focus on empowerment of women in the immigrant women's home countries. Once again the emphasis is on education, such as teaching the women to read and write. Furthermore, several projects aim to provide the women with basic tools for starting a small business and to take care of themselves and their children. In particular, the need for this kind of help is big in countries such as Iraq and Somalia which have experienced war and internal conflicts for several years.

These immigrant women's associations definitely have an important role in the integration of immigrant women into Finland. Still, these associations struggle with financing and with finding premises. A fairly modest, but common wish was to have contacts with Finns; the help of volunteers or Finnish voluntary associations was important as advice providers concerning where to look for financing or how to fill in an application form. Furthermore, the immigrants complained about difficult bureaucratic language; immigrants have misunderstandings with local authorities due to language problems.

The representation of immigrant women's associations on local advisory boards hardly existed. Only one member was representing Somalis in ETNO. The reason for this can partly be explained by the novelty of immigrant women's associations and with the fact the local advisory boards for foreigners, for example in Helsinki, had not decided what would be the most democratic way of electing representatives from immigrant groups or their associations by the end of 2004 (Saksela 2005, see also Chapter 8).

6.4 Reflections on the Outcome of Mobilising Resources and Collective Actions

The description of the eleven associations showed how immigrant associations use their material and human resources for mobilising their ethnic group members, i.e. to become more active in Finnish society and in the ethnic associations. The following sub chapter analyses to what extent the previously discussed associations have achieved collective action, which is used to create mobilisation. The first sub chapter studies two interconnected features guiding the mobilisation process, namely the interests and the level of self-organisation.

6.4.1 The importance of interests and associational self-organisation

To discover the outcome of mobilisation for associations and their ethnic group members, the following hypothesis will be discussed:

Hypothesis 1: An immigrant association cannot improve its position in the receiving society if the members do not have clear interests and a functioning organisation. These two elements guide the association's internal possibility to mobilise members from its ethnic group, i.e. the success of mobilisation depends partly on internal interests and organisation

The validity of Hypothesis 1 is studied by comparing it to the previous descriptions of mono- and multi-ethnic associations, which can be categorised by their focus groups, namely associations focusing on 'all' members of the mono-/multi-ethnic group(s), gender (in this case women's associations), and on age group (children and youth).

The ethnic resource mobilisation approach aims to find an answer to issues such as how the organisation process of an immigrant association takes place and the resource allocation of the association. Furthermore, this approach may explain the associations' strategies of interaction with their cooperation partners. The core concepts have their origin in the ethnic identity view and in the resource mobilisation view.

The previous description of immigrant associations showed the need to study further the features influencing mobilisation and collective action. In the analysis, the aim is to find out how features, such as *self-organisation* and *interests*, influence the associations' opportunities to mobilise their ethnic group members. The *application of interests*, i.e. how these are put forward in practice is closely connected with the organisational management of the group, or its so-called self-organisation. In other words, the application consists of the opportunities and skills of the members to 'set up an agenda' and of their interests and 'rules of engagement' (see also Weldon 2006). The self-organisation, in this study can be defined as a clear composition of the association's structure, such as having a board, a Chair, Vice-Chair, possibly an activity coordinator and most important of all, a group of active volunteers who are engaged in taking care of associational tasks such as following and updating the associational agenda. (The latter is formulated in the meetings of the association).

In his description of the 'mobilisation model' Tilly defines *interests* as 'the shared advantages or disadvantages likely to accrue in the population in question as a consequence of various possible interactions with other populations' (Tilly 1978:54). The definition of interests has got its beginning already during the migration process

⁷⁷ of immigrants. The interests have been further elaborated on by immigrants in their joint formulation of them. For example, the empowerment of women

⁷⁷ The migration process cannot be framed as beginning by leaving "place A" and moving to "place B". It often also includes a period of settlement in the receiving country. The settlement period can take several years. Therefore, the formulation of interests can be redefined by the members in an association after living several years in the receiving country. The associational life goes in hand with the phases of migration, i.e. the more immigrants know about the receiving society the better they can focus their interests and claims towards it.

in the home countries has a concrete form in the transnational development of a project that can be perceived as an outcome of a collective action between the members of an immigrant women's association. In addition, the interests of the immigrants are partly influenced by the receiving society as well. For example, the need to improve social and living conditions can have their origins in the immigrants' lack of social cohesion, unemployment or ethnic discrimination in school. Finnish society also influences more or less directly the opportunities of immigrants to express their interests. State interventions, in form of subsidies, integrative projects and multicultural advisory boards, may have indirectly encouraged immigrants to become organised into associations. Still, based on the information from the immigrant associations, the original idea to establish an association has often had its beginning in the immigrants' need to improve their life.

Another feature which influences the immigrant associations' practices is external resources (such as financing and premises). There appears to be a connection between the immigrant associations' use of subsidies and their inclusion into Finnish society. Both the self-organisation and the (partial) dependency of internal resources (e.g. members) and external resources (e.g. subsidies and premises) are demonstrated by five descriptions below. The descriptions should not be taken as a strict categorisation of immigrant associations mobilising effects. Immigrant associations mobilising reflect on the direction of immigrant associations' inclusive efforts. These directions will be described: assimilation, separation, integration and marginalisation. In other words, inclusion can refer to immigrant associations' attempt to strengthen the social group cohesion of an ethnic group or refer to the associations' attempt to include immigrants into the socio-economic domain of Finnish society. The subsequent description is based on data from the thirty-two associations presented in Chapter 5 of which eleven have been explored in detail in this chapter.

6.4.2 Four descriptions of associational mobilisation

Table 6.4.2 Direction of mobilisation created by the immigrant associations

An immigrant association's expressed activity forms				
Its self-organisation and interests				
	External activities	Internal activities	Both	
	High	Assimilation	Separation	Integration
	Low	Was not found	Marginalisation	Was not found

Description 1. *Assimilation as an outcome of mobilisation*

The upper-left hand corner describes an immigrant association which has clearly defined interests and a high level of self-organisation. The interests are mainly societal in their nature and receive external financing for inclusion of the immigrants into the receiving society. The main subsidy providers for bigger societal activities are the Ministry of Education, the Finland's Slot Machine Association and the European Social Fund, whereas social boards of the municipalities finance smaller activities, e.g. swimming courses (Saksela 2003:259). The societal associations focus mainly on working as service providers and the sharing of information concerning Finland. The associations primarily focussing on societal activities become service delivery agencies but do not have any concrete input on the formulation of integrative policy issues (see also Poppelaars 2007:15). In other words, the risk for the association is on a one-way inclusion or assimilation of the ethnic group into the receiving society.

The top-down governed subsidy policy also creates a power relation in the form of dependency between the immigrant associations and the governmental or municipal actors. The large number of courses with a focus on inclusion of immigrants into Finnish society can be interpreted as an immigrants' interest to be included in the society, but it can also be interpreted as an activity form which is supported by the subsidy providers. The top-down governance is necessary to a certain extent for having common rules for

voluntary associations applying for financing, but it includes at the same time the risk of crowding out of ethno specific activities (see also Bloemraad 2005, Caponio 2005). More or less half of the immigrant associations complained that they have problems getting financing.

Description 2. *Separation as an outcome of mobilisation*

The second upper cell describes an immigrant association mobilising towards separation. This kind of association has clearly defined interests and a high level of self-organisation. The associational focus is on the maintenance of ethnic identity by organising ethno-cultural and social activities. Separation is not necessarily a goal in itself, but it can become one in cases where the interests of the immigrants are not met by the governmental integrative practices. The decision to stay outside the state provided subsidy system is one step towards exclusion from the socio-economic domain of the receiving society. At the same time the association may have other resources, which provide continuance and enable mobilisation of the ethnic group members, such as social capital. Based on the data, this kind of organisational process is not very common amongst associations. Those immigrant associations, which focus only on transitional activities, can become separated from Finnish society. All of the transnational associations in this study also had an integrative aim and cannot be counted as separated, e.g. the GOLIS association, the Ziwar association.

Description 3. *Integration as an outcome of mobilisation*

The upper right corner exemplifies an immigrant association which has clearly defined interests and has a high level of self-organisation and focuses both on Finnish society and the maintenance of ethnic identity. These kinds of associations need often both internal and external resources. The data showed that a majority of the integrative and societal associations did receive financing for their activities when they had clearly defined aims and also could explain their objectives in fluent Finnish. For example, associations, which had received financing for some of their societal purposes were: the Inkeri-keskus, the Sadko klubi, the Somali League, the Hakunila International Organization and the Kanava. Common for the above mentioned associations

is their members' focus on the inclusion of the immigrants into the socio-economic domain of Finnish society.

The financing of activities enables immigrant associations' mobilisation of their ethnic group members, which increases the associations' possibilities to reach their goals. For example, the Kanava youth association has clear interests; it aims to prevent the segregation of Somali youth by providing counselling and by organising "street work"⁷⁸, amongst other things. It has received financing from Finland's Slot Machine Association. As a result the association can re-integrate, at least some of the youth into society and reach its goals.

The Ministry of Education also provides subsidies for cultural activities. The evidence received from the list of subsidies provided for voluntary associations proves that larger foreign language groups, such as the Russian speaking as well as bigger and more established associations receive subsidies more easily than small ethnic associations (see also OPM). This strengthens the impression of the importance of associations' self-organisations, such as their skills to manage their associational life.

Description 4. *Marginalisation as an outcome of mobilisation*

Here the focus is on associations which have low informal interests and low level of self-organisation, which was common for new associations. It was too early to draw conclusions during the time of analysis about marginalisation due to the short time of these associations presence.

The problem with associations, which are moving towards marginalisation, is their members' lack of awareness of where to focus e.g. on Finnish society or on their own ethnic group. A good example is the network of immigrant women's associations described in sub chapter 6.3.5. During the time of the interviews, the Chair of the Africarewo association aimed to create a network consisting of other immigrant women's associations, but had not planned any clear organisational strategies or resources. It was only four years later when the network received a bigger subsidy support aimed at supporting immigrant

78 In other words, the association provides help for Somali youth by having adults working amongst the youth on the street. The adults attempt to get the youths (re-)integrated into society.

women facing violence. There is a risk that the members neither manage to mobilise new members nor achieve any collective action as long as the members of an association face problems with the associational organisation.

Some of the immigrant women's associations had gone through a phase of "stagnation", such as the Ziwar association and the Afrocarewo association. This appears to be fairly common for small associations, which either do not have enough resources, such as the time, the money and the skills to improve its self-organisation. A further reason is the lack of social capital *inside* the associations. If the members have not created clear rules and do not have an agenda for its activities then these problems may lead to a lack of motivation, tensions between the members, and in some cases a lack of trust in the Chair (or the board) of the association. Additionally, a lack of external contacts makes the situation of the association even weaker. All of the abovementioned problems were common amongst others for the immigrant women's associations and some of these were in the point of ceasing, which is common for a young association (see also Aldrich 1999:228-231).

The unfortunate lack of financing is fairly common and is one of the biggest problems according to the members (Saksela 2005:104). Naturally, it is difficult to say without seeing all the applications, how clearly the members had expressed their interests. Nevertheless, the lack of language skills is further problem that hinders the associations in getting financing (ibid).

Summary of the four descriptions

The mobilisation of ethnic group members is influenced by the level of self-organisation, interests and of the associations' dependency on external resources, such as subsidies and premises. The majority of the immigrant associations studied are integrative, i.e. these focus on integration their members in the socio-economic domain and at the same time to maintain the ethnic identity among its group members. Still, several of the associations organise societal activities which receive governmental subsidies. The analysis showed little evidence of governmental support of ethno-cultural activities. This should not be interpreted as top-down rejection, but more as top-down ignorance. It can be called into question if ethno-cultural activities, including religious practices, are not important for creation of two-way

integration? Another issue related to the members' ability to strengthen the self-organisation of their association. As the descriptions above highlighted only immigrant associations with clear organisational skills and abilities to allocate resources can achieve mobilisation.

6.5 Summary

This chapter has discussed the organisation process of mono- and multi-ethnic associations, including immigrant women's associations. The ethnic resource mobilisation approach has guided the analysis of the Research Question 2, in other words: To what extent do immigrant (women's) associations (a) mobilise their ethnic group members to be incorporated into Finnish society, and (b) to what extent do these associations strengthen the ethnic identity of their ethnic group members? In particular, the focus has been on the interests, allocation of human and material resources and on the self-organisation of the immigrant associations. The second part of the Research Question 2 remained partly unanswered. The ethnic identity was highlighted in some of the activities organised by immigrant associations. An ethnographic study, including participative observations in some of the associations over a longer time period, could have provided an answer to the second part of the Research Question 2.

A majority of the previously described associations can be called as integrative. These immigrant associations provide a venue both to societal integration, such as into the labour market and to the Finnish education system and a venue for the re-creation of the collective ethnic identity of the immigrants. Common for mono- and multi-ethnic associations are their interests. In both associations three kinds of interests were mentioned: 1) to provide information on job opportunities and education, 2) to help with mental problems, 3) to maintain or re-create the ethnic culture. Beyond these can be mentioned another activity form that also has an important social function, namely the associations' role as a platform for social togetherness.

Why do immigrant associations mobilise their ethnic group members? And to what extent do they manage to do it? The answer to the first question can be called "empowerment". Several associations highlighted the need to

support and help immigrants who are at risk of becoming marginalised. In particular, youth and immigrant women were perceived as two groups who need more attention with their integration into Finnish society. Another group mentioned only a few times, but has recently received more attention are elderly immigrants, particularly older return migrants. Many of them suffer from an inability to communicate in the Finnish language and a lack of social contacts. Immigrant associations work both as social service providers and as actors aiming to provide a venue for the immigrants' ethnic culture.

As the previous examples of immigrant associations showed, associations with clear interests, and high self-organisation were more likely to create mobilisation among its group members than those associations, which lacked some of these features. In particular, small and new immigrant associations face problems with the articulation of their goals and activity agenda. A lack of contacts (and information) can create a stage of stagnation or in the worst case, lead to its demise. Therefore, cooperation between immigrant associations is important, because contacts can provide new resources inform of members and skills to improve the organisation of an immigrant association.

A common problem, in particular in at an early stage of an associations is the creation trust and competence. Another problem is to find premises and subsidies. So far, those immigrant associations, which have cooperation with Finnish local authorities, have also got help with finding of premises. Contacts with the majority population were also frequently requested by the immigrants.

7 Representative Opportunities and Participation of Immigrant Associations

In Finland, voluntary associations play an important role as providers of information, training courses and in representing the interests of their members (Siisiäinen 2002a). For immigrant associations, collaboration with Finnish voluntary associations is also significant. Interaction between immigrant associations and Finnish voluntary associations is still at an early stage. The following sub chapter will describe the field of humanitarian and cultural organisations working with immigrant associations. The focus in the sub chapter 7.1 is two-fold. On the one hand the aim is to explore the role of voluntary associations as mediators between immigrant associations, immigrant groups and the majority population. On the other, the aim is to study the role of non-governmental associations as collaboration partners, i.e. what kind of support, skills and information Finnish associations can bring to immigrant associations.

Since the increased migration to Finland at the beginning of 1990s, the state has taken legislative measures to improve the participation and representation of immigrants in civil society. At local level, the municipalities play an important role in coordination of integrative issues, such as societal education and guidance both for immigrants and their associations. In the Helsinki metropolitan area, the cooperation between immigrant associations and the municipalities of Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa is increasing. The cooperation takes place in form of planning and decision making process in multicultural advisory boards and in joint projects between local authorities and immigrant associations.

At the national level a consultative body, ETNO – The Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations, has been established in order to represent the interests and needs of immigrants. The structure and function of ETNO has been restructured along the development of refugee and immigration policies. In

this study, the data focuses mainly on the time period between 2001 and 2004, in other words during the 2nd period of ETNO. Additionally, some of the changes before and after the 2nd period will be discussed. In particular, in 2005 ETNO made bigger structural and functional changes, which also influenced the representation of immigrant associations. Unfortunately, this thesis does not discuss the influence of the 3rd period of ETNO (05/2005-05/2007) because the collection of data was finished in the spring 2005. Nevertheless, I will discuss more recent changes that have taken place in ETNO and in the management of the Finnish immigration policy in general in the conclusions, Chapter 8.

The data presented in this chapter is based on my previous studies (Saksela 2003, Saksela and Salmenhaara 2004, Saksela 2005) and on documents and interviews conducted with members of ETNO (during its second period, 2001-2004).

7.1 Relations Between Immigrant Associations and Finnish Voluntary Associations

In Finnish civil society the ‘co-operative means’ of voluntary associations have become crucial⁷⁹ (Helander 2005). This is also evident in the field of immigrant and refugee work. Finnish voluntary associations working with immigrants and refugees have an important role as service providers and counsellors for the previous mentioned groups. During the charting of immigrant associations I found 63 solidarity associations which can be described as associations providing support in social and health care. This group also includes a number of associations with humanitarian goals, such as Finland’s Refugee Council (*Suomen Pakolaisapu ry.*). The majority of the solidarity associations are established in the Helsinki metropolitan area, (18 associations) and in other larger cities such as Tampere (11 associations) and Turku (13 associations) (ibid).

79 The main functions of Finnish voluntary associations are to provide services (especially in social and health care issues), to lobby for the citizens interests and to influence decision making at local level (see also Helander 2005, Siisiäinen 2002a).

The importance of collaboration between civil servants and voluntary associations, including those of immigrants has been highlighted Council of State's report (VNS 5/2002). At the beginning of this decade, the collaboration between civil servants, solidarity and immigrant associations was fairly small, but the number of collaborative projects is increasing. The solidarity and immigrant associations are aware that there is not enough collaboration taking place. For example, the Finnish Red Cross has highlighted their need to find out more information on the current needs of immigrant associations and of their experiences on working on collaborative projects (Report from the Finnish Red Cross seminar, 17.05.2005).

Solidarity associations play two kinds of roles in an immigrant associations' opportunity to participate in Finnish civil society. Firstly, solidarity associations work as mediators between immigrant associations and Finnish society. As mediators, non-governmental organisations such as the 'Finnish Red Cross' (*Suomen Punainen Risti*) and the 'Council For Refugee Help' (*Suomen Pakolaisapu ry.*) among others, help the newly arrived immigrants and refugees get counselling on social and health issues. For example, the Finnish Red Cross organises family reunification and is one of the key actors in refugee reception. The association has also established friendship clubs to promote interaction. One of its core projects in immigration tasks is to promote integration (Saksela 2003:271). The Finnish Red Cross received financing for a project called "the integration path" (*Kotopolku*), 2001-2007. The objective of the project was to assist immigrants integrate into Finland. This project focused on providing information on the Finnish education system and labour market while also supporting immigrant associations to plan their activities, (see also *Kotopolku*).

Another important function of solidarity associations is to work as collaborative partners with immigrant associations. In the previously mentioned 'Kotopolku project', immigrant associations are perceived as equal partners in the planning of activities. Finland's Refugee Council also had a project with the objective of empowering immigrant associations, (2005-2007). The project *Järjestöhautomo* consisted of a three parts course providing education on the management of a voluntary association: how to write subsidy

applications, information on Finnish society and on establishing of networks between voluntary associations (Zakeri and Tuunainen 2007).

Beyond the integrative goals of several solidarity associations is their aim to fight discrimination and racism and several solidarity associations have joined the national network, RASMUS. This is a network consisting of individuals and non-governmental actors whose objective is to fight racism and xenophobia and to improve multicultural relations. RASMUS is coordinated by the *Finnish League of Human Rights* association (*Ihmisoikeusliitto ry.*). The network provides information on activities and debates concerning immigrants and ethnic minorities via an active e-mail list and through its website (see also Rasmus). Furthermore, the network organises annual and regional meetings. According to the project coordinator of the Finnish League of Human Rights, the association does not have any projects with immigrant associations but they have been in contact with several immigrant and refugee associations regarding the creation of the Finnish ENAR – European Network against Racism (Saksela 2003).

Opportunities of participation for immigrant associations

Finnish humanitarian and solidarity organisation provide an important access for immigrant associations into Finnish civil society. The goals and interests of Finnish associations and immigrant associations are partly the same; to provide opportunities for citizens and non-citizens to participate in societal and cultural activities. The latter takes shape mainly in ethno-specific form in immigrant associations. Societal activities are mostly the same for immigrants and the natives, such as excursions, different kinds of sport activities, cooking and handcraft courses as well as educational activities (health care seminars, I.T. courses). Beyond the more general societal activities, immigrant associations have an interest in organising courses and seminars on labour orientation, the Finnish language and society.

As the previous sub chapters showed, cooperation between Finnish associations and immigrant associations is fairly small. The reason for this is partly reciprocal; neither the Finnish associations nor the immigrant associations are very familiar with each others activity forms. cooperation is more natural between associations in cases where the natives take part in

immigrant associations' activities, such as the multi-ethnic associations. Some of these associations consist of families where one of the parents is a native. Members from immigrant associations highlighted an interest in learning more about Finnish associational life, such as how to apply for subsidies, premises and how to create networks with other associations.

Exchange of knowledge and skills between Finns and immigrants would strengthen the multicultural voluntary work in Finnish civil society. According to the Chairs of immigrant associations only very few immigrant associations have created a contact network consisting of immigrant and Finnish associations (Saksela 2003). Networking could improve the skills of the members of integrative immigrant associations.

Nevertheless, networking with Finnish voluntary associations is not necessarily always the best solution for the improvement of visibility of immigrant associations. In the case of ethno-cultural specific immigrant associations, it can be difficult to find interests that would suit both immigrants and Finns. One way of networking for ethno-cultural associations is that they only focus on one common interest, such as the improvement of immigrant women's living condition and the fight against discrimination and racism. The problem is that ethno-specific activities remain in the "shadow". Furthermore, there is a risk that cooperation between immigrant associations and Finnish voluntary associations might increase competition between immigrant associations. This, in turn could lead to a re-focusing of interests towards those of the majority population.

7.2 Cooperation Forms Between Immigrant Associations and Institutional Actors

The second part of this chapter explores the collaboration between immigrant associations and local authorities working in the Espoo, Helsinki and Vantaa municipalities between the years 2000-2001 (see also Saksela 2005). The cooperation has in some cases started earlier and has continued in diverse forms after this time period. Here, the attempt is to shed light on the main channels of cooperation and possible obstacles between immigrant associations

and local policy makers in the framing of integration policy. The data⁸⁰ was originally collected for a joint study on the living conditions of immigrants in the Helsinki metropolitan area (Joronen (ed.) 2005). Additionally, this sub chapter explores how the multicultural centre, *the International Cultural Centre* officially abbreviated as *Caixa* works as a venue for immigrants and their association. Caixa belongs to the City of Helsinki. The following official bodies were contacted: Department of Immigration Affairs⁸¹, Helsinki City Service Department, the Finnish National Board of Education, the Economic and Employment Development Centre, the Multi-Service Office for Immigrants of Vantaa, the Multicultural Advisory Board of Espoo, the Multicultural Advisory Board of Vantaa, the Advisory Councils for Foreigners of Helsinki and local service centres of the three municipalities. Additionally, the Coordinators for immigration work of the three municipalities were interviewed.

Caixa – the International Cultural Centre

Multicultural associations are other important channels which have two significant aims. First, these associations provide a platform for cultural dialogue between Finns and ethnic minority groups and secondly, they support the maintenance of the foreigners' own culture. Multicultural centres⁸², such as *Caixa – the International Cultural Centre*⁸³, provide meeting places for associations and locations for organising cultural events and public debates.

Caixa was established by the municipality of Helsinki in 1996. Behind the idea were various solidarity organisations and other non-governmental organisations as well as individuals who acknowledged the need for such a meeting place. The need to establish a meeting place to promote the wellbeing and employment

80 The interviews conducted among local authorities were done by e-mail questionnaires in Finnish. Therefore I have preferred to refer to the majority of the interviews instead of direct quotation.

81 Free translation by the author from 'Maahanmuuttoasioiden yksikkö'

82 These may be either occasional cultural sites, such as multicultural festivals organised by the communities, or multicultural associations, which work as meeting places for both immigrants and other people and offer a gathering place for (immigrant) associations.

83 For a complete description of Caixa as a multicultural meeting place, see 'The case of Finland' (2004) by Saksela Sanna and Perttu Salmenhaara in the country case report of Finland, edited by Sandlund Tom. *GLOCALMIG. Minorities, Migrants belonging and Citizenship, Glocalization and Participation Dilemmas in the EU and Small States: Country case report: Finland*. BRIC Publishers: Bergen.

of immigrants, as well as their participation in civic society was noted in the foreign policy programme of 1995, which also acknowledged the role of the immigrant organisations (Joronen 2003:13, 15). The programme highlighted the importance of maintaining immigrants' collective identity through participation in their own ethnic associations, by which they could strengthen their identities in organisational activities which could help them become incorporated into the receiving society (Helsingin kaupunginkanslia 1995: 29).

The core objectives of Caisa are to integrate immigrants and ethnic minorities into the majority culture and at the same time to emphasize the cultural backgrounds of these groups. According to Ms. Maula, director of Caisa⁸⁴: 'The idea is that you cannot be a complete person and adapt to new situations if you are not aware of what you are and feel proud of it', (Interviewee Caisa 0508). The multicultural centre strives to fulfil the integrative objectives in three ways. Firstly, Caisa functions as a meeting place for people from different cultural backgrounds, including members of both majority and minority groups. This is especially important for those coming to Finland from outside Europe. Everything is completely different, from the climate to the way of life and institutional politics. Secondly, Caisa offers meeting places for voluntary associations which promote ethnic minorities' cultural backgrounds and rights, as well as their belongingness to Finnish society. For example different associations from both majority and minority cultures organise activities, seminars and meetings in the premises. Thirdly, multicultural associations organise activities for members of both majority and minority cultures. These activities include social and cultural events, as well as educational courses with the aim of facilitating incorporation into the labour market.

As a multicultural meeting place, Caisa strives to promote both integrative activities organised by the majority group and social and cultural activities arranged by ethnic minorities. Neither political nor religious interests are supported by Caisa nor by the City of Helsinki. Cultural activities consist of art exhibitions, cultural clubs and groups, such as a Capoeira group, a Thai

⁸⁴ Maula has been on leave of absence since the beginning of 2007 and Mr. Akar has been in charge of the management.

handicraft club, dance courses, and an art therapy course for young adults. There are many activities for youth and children, and future aims also include programmes for older migrants whose number is growing. Another form of activity which has become very successful is the *Women's International Living Room*. This is a regular gathering of women from different ethnic backgrounds. The idea is not to provide information about the Finnish social system, but rather to focus on the women's own cultural backgrounds and knowledge. One of *Caisa's* focal happenings is the so called *Traditional Fair – Caisan Messut*, which is an annual event. It is a meeting place for several immigrant associations, non-governmental organisations (NGO's) and institutions, providing information on the cultures and the situation in the immigrants' home countries, as well as information about Finnish educational programmes and social services.

A significant proportion of the cultural activities are arranged by immigrants or their associations. The focus is mainly on educational, social and cultural projects aimed at both women and men of all ages and from any ethnic background. *Caisa* offers a wide range of language courses and projects together with other administrations such as the Employment Office and NGOs. The core aim of these projects is to facilitate the incorporation of immigrants into the labour market. Projects with integrative purposes, such as the Open Learning Centre and SELMA, are organised as part of the regional programmes and with the Ministry of Labour the Social Service Department of Helsinki. Some of the projects are funded by the European Social Fund (see also Saksela and Salmenhaara 2004).

In comparison to the majority of immigrant association, *Caisa* can provide premises and several kinds of multicultural events for immigrants. This is partly to do with the support from the municipality of Helsinki and *Caisa's* collaboration with local authorities working with immigration issues as well as voluntary associations. *Caisa* has a large network of contacts with both the private and public sectors. Significant cooperation partners include members and associations at the grass-root level (NGO's, ethnic groups and organisations), the local level (communal institutions) and the national level (ministries). The contact network also enables communication between the 'supra-national' (EU) level and the Ministry of Labour. Immigrant

organisations have been very poorly represented, but their number has grown in recent years.

Municipalities as project providers

One of the foremost cooperation forms are projects organised by the municipalities together with immigrant associations (Saksela 2005). Several of these projects aim to find ways to improve the living conditions of immigrants, such as: JOIN – Joint Promotion of Anti-discrimination at Local Level, URBAN - Community Initiative Programme and the “Neighbourhood Project” coordinated by the city of Helsinki⁸⁵. These projects were started in the mid 1990s and were financed by the municipalities and the European Social Fund of the EU. From the beginning of the 21st century, collaboration projects between local authorities and immigrant associations have increased. Larger municipalities in Finland have started to organise ESF funded projects with a focus on cooperation between local authorities, Finnish multicultural associations and immigrant associations⁸⁶.

A major project in Helsinki was the “Neighbourhood Project” focusing on the living conditions and environment in Eastern Helsinki. This was also of interest to immigrants, because Eastern Helsinki is the area most densely populated area by foreigners. Within the framework of this project, so-called “neighbourhood centres” have been established in different parts of Eastern Helsinki. These centres organise diverse kinds of social and cultural activities, including art courses, women’s cafés and sports activities - the latter two

85 For additional information, see: URBAN: <http://www.urbanfinland.info/> , JOIN <http://www.join.fi/english/index.html>, Helsingin lähiöprojekti <http://www.hel.fi/lahioprojekti/index.html> and Kunnostusta ja kuntokävelyä, asukastiloja ja aikamatkoja. Onnistuiko Helsingin lähiöprojekti? In Bäcklund ja Schulman (2000) and Lähiöprojekti lähikuvassa. Lähiöprojektikauden 2000-2003 arviointi in Bäcklund ja Schulman (2003).

86 In 2005 an ESF funded project ‘PROMENIO’ was started in the municipalities of Tampere and Turku. The aim of the project was to empower immigrant associations and to improve their participation in Finnish society. The activities consisted mainly of seminars with the goal of improving the participation of immigrant associations in civil society and of working groups with a focus on employment. An additional aim was to strengthen the network of immigrant associations and local authorities. PROMENIO is part of the ‘Community Initiative EQUAL Programme’. In Finland this project was managed by municipalities’ employment offices. The project lasted from January 2005 until the end of October 2007. (PROMENIO <http://www.promenio.net/> page visited 14.01.2007, PRMOENIO leaflet).

targeted especially at immigrant women. Some of these centres also provide joint activities with immigrant associations, such as language courses and cultural events. Another project was the SISU-Integra project which aimed to create working places and help with the establishment of small enterprises amongst the immigrants.

Sisu-Integra-project (funded by ESF) was from 1998 to 2000. This project was a joint project together with immigrant associations. We employed staff with the money of the project and paid rent and other running costs from the project.--- The City of Helsinki subsidies yearly associations, also immigrant associations have received financing.

An employee of Helsinki City Department of Social Services

In Espoo, two projects (*Saaxib* and *Taakulo*), were jointly carried out by immigrants and immigrant associations. These projects were financed by the *Association for Refugee Help*. The core aim was to improve awareness of the immigrant associations by providing courses and information on their management. According to a project coordinator from City of Espoo, they would have wished to have more immigrant associations. She pointed out that several immigrant associations have not realised their societal importance in Finnish society. Another problem has been to find appropriate timing for meetings. Meetings organised by immigrant associations are often later on in the evening, after the working day of local authorities, whereas meetings organised by authorities take place during the working day when several of the immigrants are working.

We have twice organised multicultural festivals in Espoo, in 2000 and 2001. Immigrant associations participated in both of them, in the latter one also [associations]⁸⁷ from Vantaa and Helsinki. The problem is that local authorities do this kind of work during the working day, whereas the representatives of associations do this voluntarily, with a reward of a coffee or tea. During this time, only a few associations could see what kind of profit they could get from this visibility.

Employee of the Social Services of City of Espoo

87 Added by the author.

In Vantaa, cooperation with immigrant associations started in 1996. A multicultural association was established as an initiative taken by the refugee office in Vantaa. According to the Coordinator for immigration work the most significant form of cooperation was done within the framework of the integration of Ingrian return migrants (1998-2001). Other projects followed, in cooperation with immigrants and, in some cases also with immigrant associations. For example, these projects have focused on the empowerment of refugee women, on the integration of immigrant children and youth and on how to improve the employment of immigrants into the Finnish labour market. One project worker from Vantaa pointed out the possibility to have immigrant associations as service providers in the future. This could mean outsourcing services from the associations⁸⁸.

During 2002 and 2003 we have, together with coordinators for immigration work, organised a few meetings with associations where we have discussed immigrant associations' interest and the motivation to outsource their services for immigration reception services⁸⁹. We will continue the discussion in 2004. The aim is to prepare a strategy for outsourcing services.

Employee of the Multi-Service Office for Immigrants in Helsinki

According to the project coordinators of the three cities, good cooperation has been possible only after several years work with immigration issues (see also Saksela 2005). Over the years, local authorities have created contacts both with immigrants and immigrant associations. Social contacts have proven to be valuable in their project work.

⁸⁸ In 2005, the City of Vantaa made a charting of immigrant associations' interest for the outsourcing of social services. Several associations expressed an interest to provide services in the form of peer support and to help recently arrived immigrants or refugees in Vantaa. As a result, the so called **Monirinki** project aims to provide educational services and counselling for immigrant associations. (Monirinki, <http://www.monirinki.vantaalla.info/>).

⁸⁹ In Finnish: maahanmuuttajien vastaanottotoiminta

Advisory Board for Multicultural Affairs

The main functions of the 'Advisory Board for Multicultural Affairs'⁹⁰ (*Monikulttuurisuusasiain neuvottelukunta*) of Espoo and Vantaa and the 'Advisory Council for Foreigners'⁹¹ (*Helsingin Ulkomaalaisasiain neuvottelukunta*) are to coordinate and advise different delegations for immigration affairs, to follow the outcomes of the integration programmes and to follow the work done by the delegation for ethnic discrimination and racism. The opinion of the immigrant associations was also heard in planning follow up enquiries of the integration programmes (*Te-keskusten seurantakysely* 2001 and 2002).

The city government of Helsinki decided to establish a permanent advisory council for foreigners at the beginning of 1995. The council consists of representatives for diverse institutions dealing with integration and works as a platform for civil servants. The director of immigration affairs of Helsinki City emphasised the priorities as being to follow changes taking place in the living conditions of immigrants and to keep in contact with other institutions working with immigrants. In 2004, the Advisory Council for Foreigners in Helsinki was planning to involve members of immigrant associations and representatives of immigrant groups⁹² (interviewee CC).

In Espoo, the Advisory Board for Multicultural Affairs was established in 1996. The board also focused on the follow up to the integration programme and on the planning of projects and services for immigrants. According to the Coordinator of immigration work members of immigrant associations participate in the planning but not in the decision making process of the advisory board's working groups in Espoo. Amongst other associations,

90 Free translation by the author.

91 Free translation by the author.

92 Since 2007, The Advisory Board on Immigration and Integration has been represented by members of political parties. The City Board decided to exclude the idea of involving members from immigrant associations due to questions concerning representation, such as: who's interests do numerous and dynamic organisations represent, how to evaluate this representation (which groups are unintentionally excluded and included) and how to construct an administrative organ based on democratic principles? Civil servants act either as 'permanent' or as 'invited' experts in the board, whereas representatives of organisations (civic and political) act as regular board members. (Information received from Ms. Annika Forsander, the director of immigration affairs (07.08.2008).

immigrant associations representing Russian speaking members and Somalis and Finnish voluntary associations have taken part in the board.

The situation was similar in Vantaa, although their advisory board for immigrants was established somewhat later in 2001. During its 1st period (2001-2002) it focused on outlining Vantaa's main immigration policy issues, following the realisation of the integration programme and also the planning of services for immigrant with representatives from their associations and groups. In Vantaa, as in Espoo, immigrants could take part in the planning but not in the decision making process. (Coordinator of immigration work in Vantaa).

The authorities participating in the advisory councils pointed out the problems of reaching all immigrant associations in their communities due to out dated or missing contact information. An additional problem is finding out a democratic way which would work equally for the election of suitable representatives for the immigrant groups and their associations. For example, the City of Helsinki had tried to support the establishment and function of a board for immigrants called HELMA. This was coordinated by the immigrants but the idea and structure came from the municipalities (see also Saksela 2005).

At the end of 1999, The Board for Foreigners discussed of the idea of establishing a joint forum for immigrants. In 2000 the immigrants decided, on the basis of the boards discussion, that they wanted to have their own forum. This way, the board for immigrants in Helsinki was created. In the beginning they had 16 members who represented diverse groups. They also had their own representatives. The members represented either a particular language group or ethnic group and they had also members from immigrant associations. The purpose for the authorities was that the board would have represented the interests of immigrants in the meetings regarding issues of immigrants in the institutions of the city.--- The guidelines of needs and interests was drawn by the board itself. The board had the possibility to use the premises at Nokiantie and the representatives of "HELMA" also participated as experts in the meetings of the Board for Foreigners. At the end of 2001 the activities of HELMA

ended. After an active beginning the members didn't participate in the activities anymore. The reasons for the ending of the activities can only be best answered by the immigrants themselves who took part in it.

An employee of the Helsinki City Service Department, (0701)

Social services

The cooperation started in 1992 a result of the vocational institute of Kallio contacting us about issues relating to return migrants. Lots of return migrants from the former Soviet Union gathered and studied there. Our role in the Department of Immigration Affairs was to inform about issues relating to our activities and to social services. The most common task was about income support. After this the first immigrant associations were established in 1993. --- Real cooperation started when I was appointed as director [1997]⁹³. It was at that point we started to plan the SISU Integra project

Director of the "Department of Immigration Affairs"
of Helsinki⁹⁴ (Maahanmuuttoyksikkö)

The City of Helsinki Department of Social Services, including the "Department of Immigration Affairs" and the "Information Point for Immigrants" (*Maahanmuuttajien neuvontapiste*)⁹⁵ provide the immigrant associations mainly with consultation on the financing of activities. Authorities working in information points for immigrants also provide help with the organisation of cultural and sporting activities. The cooperation with immigrants and their associations differs between the living areas in Helsinki. For example, the Department of Immigration Affairs, which is located in Eastern Helsinki, has been in contact with immigrant associations in the form of projects since 1997. The planning of an integrative project together with immigrants and immigrant associations started in 1997. It focused on return migrants' children with drug problems and on the employment of immigrant youth.

93 Added by the author.

94 Free translation by the author.

95 The information is based on the answers received from Helsinki, due to the lack of answers from Espoo and Vantaa.

The director of the Department of Immigration Affairs pointed out that immigrant associations can apply for financing from the board of social affairs. In particular, integrative activities have received financing. From the answer it was not clear if she meant ethno-specific cultural activities or only societal ones. According to the local authorities, contacts between immigrant associations and local authorities could be stronger:

Yes, good functioning contacts with local authorities play a role. Immigrant associations may have introduced their needs and interests to authorities representing the state, or to Members of Parliament who have shown willingness relating to their activities. This doesn't mean that things would work at local level. Sometimes the most useful and most important contacts are very close, in local schools, teachers and other associations, etc.

An employee of the Helsinki City Service Department, (0605)

In Espoo, social services are divided into five different areas: Espoonlahti, Espoo centre, Leppävaara, Matinkylä-Olari and Tapiola. These service centres do not cooperate formally with immigrant associations, although some associations have organised their activities within their premises. The focus of the service centres is to provide counselling and to organise language courses. Employees of the service centres pointed out that they wished to receive more information about immigrant associations.

The *Multi-Service Office for Immigrants* (Maahanmuuttajien yhteis-palvelutoimisto) of Vantaa is in charge of integrative services for refugees, expatriates from former Soviet Union and immigrants in general. The office provides counseling and information of employment, education, social and health care issues amongst others.

The Finnish National Board of Education

The Board of Education has been a key actor since the beginning of planning of social services for refugees and later on for immigrants. It has emphasised the importance of culture and language in the integration of refugees and immigrants. The civil servant of the board pointed out that the board does not have any cooperation projects with immigrant associations, but it has

organised information seminars for immigrant associations and mosques. The board also receives feedback from immigrants through language teachers. Some immigrant associations organise language courses together with the municipalities. For example, an Ingrian association for return migrants has received both financial support as well as a language teacher from the City of Helsinki.

Economic and Employment Development Centre

The interviewees from the 'Economic and Employment Development Centre of Uusimaa' mentioned that the Centre does not have any joint projects with immigrant associations but has organised seminars, employment course forums and job opportunities where they have invited members from immigrant associations. The centre has also made a follow-up survey of the integration programmes, which were explored by the multicultural advisory boards

The centre has been in contact indirectly with immigrant associations. For example, Economic and Employment Development Centre has informed associations about funding opportunities in seminars and in a project called *ProTo-project tools for learning*, which was funded by the European Social Fund. One of the core tasks of the centre has been to 'plan and organise adult training within the official labour policy framework' (see also TE-keskus). As a result, authorities from the centre perceived the idea of further collaboration between the centres and immigrant associations as a positive idea. The authorities are interested in organising further seminars and in receiving more information on immigrant associations, but due to lack of information about existing associations, it has been difficult to achieve.

Coordinators for immigration work

An additional source, important for the inclusion of immigrant and their associations into Finnish society is the work done by the coordinators for immigration work in respective municipalities. The coordinators have an important role in the dissemination of information and as bridge builders between immigrant associations and the municipalities. This post has been established in all larger municipalities to facilitate the implementation of the

individual integration plans. The coordinator also plays an important role in the development of immigration services and in the preparation of protocols for the Advisory Board for Multicultural Affairs of Espoo and Vantaa and for the Advisory Council for Foreigners in Helsinki. The coordinators have also highlighted the importance of the active participation of immigrant associations in integrative work.

We have cooperated since the beginning of the post of coordinator (and even earlier). The cooperation started with a meeting of a forum for associations. Today we have even more contact. Representatives for associations were also invited to the advisory council when it started its work; this kind cooperation has continued since. In the organisation of events the associations plays a central role. We cooperate intensively with associations in several projects.

Coordinator for immigration work in Vantaa

Although the establishment of the coordinator post has facilitated immigration work in the communities, there is still some lack of clarity in terms of the division of the labour. For example, the coordinators and the members of non-governmental organisations hoped for a clearer division of tasks between the authorities and non-governmental organisations.

Summary of cooperation forms

Cooperation between immigrant associations and local authorities was still in its initial phase in 2000-2001 and based on the answers from several local authorities they were still looking for more information about immigrant associations in 2004.

The most important cooperation forms were different kinds of projects organised by municipalities and the participation of immigrant associations in local advisory boards. In 2004, immigrant associations could participate in the planning of integrative issues but not in the decision making processes in the working groups of the multicultural advisory boards of Espoo and Vantaa. In Helsinki the Advisory Board for Foreigners had not at that point decided on a fair way to elect representatives from amongst the different immigrant associations.

Other counselling contacts have been the office of social service from the three municipalities. For example, the City of Helsinki Social Services Department, Department of Immigration Affairs in Eastern Helsinki have provided valuable information on financing. The social service department has also organised a project for return migrants and with an immigrant association amongst other things. In Espoo and Vantaa the cooperation has mainly taken place in the form of projects.

Table 7.2.1 Cooperation partners and their forms of interaction

Cooperation partners	Forms of interaction
Advisory Councils for Foreigners	Exchange of expertise in the planning and follow-up of integration programmes.
Department of Immigration Affairs of the municipality of Espoo, Helsinki and Vantaa	Projects with a focus on improving the well-being of immigrants
City of Helsinki Social Services Department , Unit of immigration in East-Helsinki	Counselling and support for financing the associations
Board of Education	Development of educational courses, (no direct contact with the Board of Education).
Economic and Employment Development Centre	Exchange of information among immigrant associations and consultation about employment and educational courses

Both the Board of Education and the Economic and Employment Development Centre organised information seminars of integration programme for immigrants and the representatives of immigrant associations. Nevertheless, the authorities mentioned that they have had problems in finding updated contact information about the immigrant associations.

It can be concluded, that although cooperation between immigrant associations and local authorities is fairly small, the awareness of the need of cooperation has increased among authorities and immigrants. One of the problems contributing to the lack of cooperation has been to do with the weak exchange of information between the local authorities and immigrant associations. Some associations have taken an active role as information providers for the authorities and also have good contacts with them. The problem is also with a lack of knowledge and resources among the smaller immigrant associations about the sharing of information.

7.3 Interpretations of Grassroots and Institutional Actors

The aim of the cooperation is to improve the opportunities of immigrant associations to participate in Finnish society. This depends both on the institutional structure of the municipalities' multicultural work as well as on the motivation of immigrants to participate in collaborative activities, such as joint projects. The immigrant associations have had several good experiences with the local authorities, although the number of associations having cooperation with local authorities is still small. The ethno-cultural associations did not have any cooperation with local authorities and the integrative associations mainly had cooperation in the form of projects (but not all of them). The societal immigrant associations often had a broad contact network including both contacts and collaboration with local authorities. The transnational associations had only a few contacts with local authorities; instead they had cooperation projects financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This shows that the ministries interest in providing support and sharing knowledge with immigrant associations to be working successfully at grass-root level.

7.3.1 Perceptions of cooperation by immigrant associations

Members of the immigrant associations have also acknowledged that their associations should be given an equal role in the negotiation and planning of activities and in decision making. After all, the immigrants often have the best expertise in the problems experienced in the communities and associations (Saksela 2005, Report from the Finnish Red Cross seminar, 17.05.2005). One reason for poor representation and participation of immigrant associations in formal venues had to do with their weak self-organisation. It turned out that the members had problems with their organisational skills and presence in formal venues. The descriptive representations caused problems particularly amongst new associations where the sharing of tasks and board structure was still vaguely formulated. This also explains why older associations with a high level of self-organisation and a clear descriptive representation of their association were often the ones who had firmer contacts with local

authorities and in certain cases a visible place in decision making bodies, such as multicultural advisory boards in the City of Espoo and in the City of Vantaa.

The data collected from the thirty-two immigrant associations showed that a majority had at least one or two contact partners with local authorities. These contact partners were often contacted during the completion of applications or when requesting deadlines for subsidy applications or information about possible subsidy donors. The number of “active” immigrant associations who have regular contacts with local authorities are those which have also contact networks consisting of immigrants, other immigrant associations, Finnish voluntary associations and local authorities. In certain cases direct contacts with ministries, such as Ministry of Foreign Affairs are important, for example as a project partner in a transnational development project.

The mono-ethnic associations consisting of personal networks, such as the bigger associations representing Russian speaking members and Somali associations could manage fairly well even without external contacts from the local authorities as long as their focus was on ethno-cultural activities. Instead, the integrative dimensions, i.e. the organisation of societal services often require a certain familiarity with the Finnish welfare-state system. For example, the associations providing social services have to know to what extent they, as voluntary associations, can work as service providers and from where they can find the right professional contacts in social services and the health care sector. During the interviews the members of immigrant associations emphasised four areas where they specified the need for help: 1) self-organisation of the associations, 2) financing, 3) exchange of information and 4) in the creation of contacts with the majority population.

The importance of self-organisation of the immigrant associations

Self-organisation of the association was never mentioned as a direct problem, but this was an obvious problem for several associations with whom I had been in contact with during the data collection. There were at least two common problems among small and new associations. Firstly, these associations were neither familiar with the Finnish voluntary associational work nor with the management of an organisation. For example, one interviewee had been

very disappointed that local authorities who had taken their association as their project partner had not given her a permanent working place. Other common misunderstandings mentioned by some local authorities included that the immigrants had expected to get a salary for their work done in their associations. In practice, very few associations can pay – project based – a salary for their members. A former member of ETNO had also been disappointed with the advisory board, because it had not organised a working place. Secondly, the time management was a problem for several associations. The board members and Chairs complained that associational life is very time consuming and it was difficult to find members who could devote their spare time to associational life. Some of the active members worked during the day or took care of children at home. Although, the members could meet in the evenings there was lack of members who could take the initiative to organise activities. For example, the Chair of the Iraqi Women's Association, mentioned the problem of recruiting new members. It was common that women contacted them when they needed help but did not show an interest in their activities such as organising social events or helping other victimised women. Another women's association, the Monica-Naiset Association had solved the problem by organising peer support courses where new members could be recruited.

Financing

Almost all associations had problems with financing. This can be explained not only by the lack of knowledge of where to look for subsidies but also the lack of language skills to write an application. Some associations had been in contact with authorities working in social services department.

This is our main problem. We do not have any contact with the city. Nobody advises us! We need someone who could advise us. This has now been more than two years, we need somebody who can help us to fill the application or what we could do against the violence, it's a big problem for women.

A member from an immigrant women's association, WB1

As the previous chapters have shown, the major subsidy provider is Finland's Slot Machine Association, who subsidises the majority of immigrant association's cultural activities. From the ministries the main subsidy providers are the Ministry of Education (Finnish courses and IT-courses) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (transnational development projects), while the Ministry of Social and Health Affairs finance has focused on issues related to the improvement of immigrants' mental and physical health, such as the financing of a report on immigrant women against violence. The municipalities have provided subsidies for some of the associations' societal activities, such as a swimming course for women and premises for playing football for immigrant youth, but these are coordinated through the boards of the municipalities.

Municipalities are the main providers of premises for immigrant associations. Other places are Caisa and some multi-ethnic associations with their own premises in Helsinki and Vantaa. Although the majority of the financed activities are societal, it does not mean that the associations would not focus on cultural activities. On the contrary, a majority of the thirty-two associations focus both on ethno-cultural and societal activities, and can be classified as integrative in their nature. It can be called into question how much and how many associations the Finland's Slot Machine Association can subsidise if it is the main subsidy provider. In other words, the competition for subsidies increases also among the immigrant associations. The ones who have a firmer organisation and Finnish language skills are more likely to receive subsidies than smaller associations who often lacked organisational skills and language knowledge. The bigger associations also have fairly well established networks and contacts including Finnish speaking members.

Exchange of information

SSB: What kind of cooperation did the immigrant associations wish to have?

Interviewee: Information, this was expressed often. It should be in their native language. For example, that they could get a bunch of information booklets, which they could share. When they have their own meetings

then there can be several hundred [immigrants]⁹⁶ present, then someone could read the information booklet aloud in his own native language. --- The problem is the official jargon; we would need more said in clear text or by fewer sentences. Someone could test read for example the text about income support, if it's clear, do they understand it.

A member of a support association⁹⁷
for immigrant associations, Helsinki

The above mentioned quotation shows that even when there are published booklets it does not necessarily reach all immigrants. Therefore, according to the member, the sharing of information in different languages and at several events and institutions could improve the access to information among the immigrants. The members of immigrant associations highlighted that they have problems writing subsidy applications. This is partly related to the lack of Finnish language skills, but also to lack of information of Finnish bureaucracy and of associational life. Furthermore, immigrant associations have problems finding information about where to apply for subsidies. At the same time local authorities from various institutions attempt to organise information seminars, but unfortunately the information does not reach all associations. A general problem with immigrant associations is their weak representation. The reason for this is not necessarily a weak descriptive representation of the association, but more of lack of skills to combine it with Finnish civil society. Here, again the problem is how to get access to Finnish voluntary life? One natural way would be more efficient cooperation between immigrant associations and Finnish voluntary organisations. Furthermore, several local authorities can provide information about financing, accounting and the organisation of events. The current problem appears to be that the various actors do not meet each others skills and needs. According to one immigrant, it is not sufficient to ask for help. Instead, you have to ask the right questions to receive the right answers.

96 Added by the author.

97 I interviewed a member of a support association for immigrant associations during the data collection for the cooperation forms between local authorities and immigrant associations (Saksela 2005). My aim was to get additional information of the problems and needs of immigrant associations.

I can just tell you from my own experiences, that a local authority cannot understand that even though a foreigner would have lived over ten years in Finland he might still need information: Clear question, clear answer, if there is no question then there will be no answer

A member of a Russian association

Intercultural communication is still a fairly new issue in Finnish (organisational) society. Governmental institutions with advisory boards and working-groups, educational system, labour market and the social and health sectors are organisations which have been established to serve a fairly homogenous population. However, changes have taken place. By the end of the 1990s, municipalities had taken several actions to improve the integration of immigrants, for example by establishing multicultural advisory boards, providing information seminars on the integration programme and by establishing posts for coordinators working with immigration issues, amongst others. Still, it is common that misunderstanding takes place due to language problems and cultural differences.

SS-B: Can immigrants get their voice heard in our society?

Interviewee: The language problem is a central problem and the culture. If they come from Africa or South America, then the communication can be different. They have not adapted to the Finnish model. Language and culture problems. Civil servants think often that they have to speak English with the immigrants. Finnish authorities, themselves are not feeling all right with their cultural identity! (You can write that down). The idea that 'you should also learn Finnish, this culture is interesting' cannot be transferred by them. As a consequence we start to speak English. It gives an illusion that we do not stand firmly on the ground – we don't learn Finnish properly when authorities do not emphasise it.

A member of a support association
for immigrant associations, Helsinki

Several interviewed associations highlighted the need to improve the teaching conditions of Finnish language. The critic was not so much focused on teaching methods, but on the existing requirements for immigrants' participation in

Finnish language courses and also on the lack of opportunities to take part in advanced courses. Additionally, the immigrants' lack of knowledge about existing opportunities to participate in more advanced level courses sounds alarming.

--- I think the authorities should help women more than now ... finding a job, finding courses. It is not necessary for them to stay at home e.g. if they do not have children. Like in Sweden it is an obligation to learn Swedish and after that they go to work, but not here! If we have Finnish courses, for example, nobody says that we should continue after the third level. Finnish courses continue up to the fifth level. The Ministry of Labour⁹⁸ should think about these matters. We should not stop at the third level.

A member of an immigrant women's association, WB1

The members of the associations also criticised the individual integration plan. According to a member, it is difficult if a young mother has to stay at home with a baby and cannot participate in a Finnish language course. One association has had cases where young women complained that they had been left outside the language programme due to long maternity leave.

Creation of contacts

According to members of the immigrant associations they do have contacts with local authorities and other civil servants, and only a few had established collaboration projects with the authorities or with Finnish voluntary associations.

A majority of those immigrant associations focusing on societal or integrative activities had contacts with the main social service providers in their municipality, ministries working with immigration issues and other significant contacts. For example, important contacts included the Finnish Immigration Service, The Border Guard, and the Police in problem solving of residence permission and social allowances, but these contacts did not work as collaboration partners. Some of these actors do organise information seminars. Occasionally immigrant associations and their ethnic group have

⁹⁸ Today the Ministry of Interior is in charge of immigration affairs.

received help from civil servants for more equal treatment, such as the Somalis by the Border Guard.

Only a few immigrant associations mentioned the need to create contacts with Finnish voluntary associations. Instead, this topic was only mentioned by some of the local authorities. This can be due to immigrant associations' perceptions of Finnish voluntary associations as weak avenues into Finnish civil society or with a lack of knowledge of their role. Instead, the associations emphasised their interest to work with Finns in general, but this can be difficult if there are no common interests which would pull both actors together for cooperation. The need for contacts with Finns (or immigrants) was expressed by members working with return migrants:

--- either you find a place for your life or then there are huge problems; you are not very extrovert. This we can also be seen in our activities where it's really difficult to mobilise people --- people are long term unemployed or they are at work and don't have any free time.

Member of a mono-ethnic association, (0606)

Immigrant associations recognise the problem of segregation and marginalisation among their ethnic group members. This is a current problem among children growing up between two cultures. For example, the Somali League and Kanava provide both peer support and counselling for youth. Inkerikeskus focuses on improving the living conditions of older return migrants. Although the Finnish language once connected some of the people living Russian Karelia, Estonia and Finland it does not mean that these older return migrants are able to express themselves in Finnish anymore. Therefore, some immigrant associations have already realised the importance of providing societal services for older immigrants. The role of immigrant associations as a translator and mediator between two cultures will increase as the immigrants become older.

7.3.2 Perceptions of cooperation by local authorities

Cooperation between immigrant associations and local authorities is still at an early stage. Nevertheless, the existing cooperation forms are perceived as useful

by both actors. According to the local authorities, the so called integration programme (*kotouttamisohjelma*) has clarified the role of authorities but there are still obstacles in the sharing of tasks between the actors. The structure of immigration work appears to be fairly similar in the Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa municipalities. At the beginning of 2000, Espoo and Vantaa had fewer problems in the sharing of tasks than Helsinki. This had partly to do with the re-organisation of Helsinki city's social services and with the fact that the majority of foreigners live in the capital.

The innovative role of immigrant associations

The local authorities have provided several examples of how immigrant associations organised several societal, cultural and social activities for their group members. In general, the authorities found that the associations are an important mediator between the immigrant groups and the local authorities. Furthermore, immigrant associations were perceived by the authorities as a "neutral actor", which can clearly express the immigrants' needs and problems.

[The associations] have brought more information of the current situation of immigrants, and of their way of thinking of different issues. The associations have filled the gaps, which have existed in the service system of the public sphere – and have counselled the immigrants in different issues in a manner that immigrants get thorough understanding of what is going on. When the associations can provide services in their native language then things are better understood. The associations work also as an important social network.

City of Vantaa director of immigration services

Some of the authorities compared the role of the associations with peer support. The immigrant associations give information and counselling about Finnish society and provide a venue for the immigrants to express themselves in their native language. The local authorities have also gained from the collaboration. According to the coordinator for immigration affairs in Helsinki, they had received valuable information from immigrant associations in the working

groups about what kind of services the immigrants currently needed. The associations' opinion had been heard in the authorities planning meetings where they had the idea of forming an outsourcing strategy for immigrant associations. At this point there were some divided opinions on how and to what extent immigrant associations could work as service providers. A representative from Helsinki City Immigration Unit expressed: 'Voluntary work and professional work should not be mixed. Voluntary work should receive all support and respect that it needs'. Still, the idea of outsourcing came up frequently.

The role of immigrant associations were perceived as useful by the authorities if they were well organised and had received financing for their activities. The immigrants various interests also required a wide range of activities. The organisation of activities works best when the association has a clear organisational division of tasks and activities. Unfortunately, several of the immigrants were working during the day and could not fully dedicate themselves to voluntary work. Still, it is possible for immigrant associations to use the premises of the municipalities for their activities. For example, several immigrant associations have used the premises of City of Espoo for organising art and language courses for children, women's clubs and seminars against drugs (Local authority of City of Espoo Department for Social Services). Local authorities are aware of the problem of representation by immigrant associations: On the one hand the authorities are interested to listen to the ideas of representatives in the municipality projects and seminars, on the other the authorities are afraid of the risk that representatives focus more on their own interest instead of their association (Saksela 2005:105).

Problems

There have not been any big conflicts in the cooperation between the local authorities and immigrant associations. Nevertheless, mutual misunderstandings are fairly common and particularly for immigrant associations it is not easy to understand Finnish bureaucracy.

The conflicts are mainly misunderstandings related for example to economical resources. Additionally, there have been problems with

the accounting, annual reporting and with the realisation of other requirements and statutory “associational bureaucracy”.

Local authority of City of Espoo Department for Social Services
/ (unit for immigration services)

The answers from the authorities highlighted similar strengths and weaknesses of the associations. As a local authority representative from a regional information centre expressed in her written answer:

- *The immigrant associations are weak.*
- *The financial administration is difficult and only very few associations have the know-how. In this way, immigrant associations can seldom get financing for their projects, i.e. their skills of project management will not improve.*
- *The view of civil servants is often domineering*
- *The projects, which are aimed at the empowerment of immigrants, are guided by the authorities.*
- *There is little cooperation between Finnish voluntary associations and immigrant associations.*

A project coordinator from the City of Helsinki

In addition the subsidies and premises have caused some disappointment for the immigrant associations. The immigrant associations do not always have a realistic picture of how much financing they can receive and what they can do with the finance. According to a local authority representative from Espoo, some associations had become disappointed with the little amount of money their association had received when a joint financing application for several immigrant associations was realised. The immigrants are not always familiar with Finnish bureaucracy and with the tasks of the authorities. Another problem is that local authorities do not know what kind of premises the associations would need, some only need support occasionally for bigger events and others more frequently for their meetings and activities. A local authority representative from Espoo suggested how immigrant associations could have more responsibility in the management of their activities in the premises of the municipality:

The association doesn't necessarily need to have their own premises if they can use the ones from the city, that they can get for free. "XX" has been this kind of association that has had children's art and language courses, women's courses and educational work about youth problems related to drugs. The management of various kinds of activities had been based on the skills of active tutors and on the needs of the participants. It would be good if the responsibility for the management of multifaceted activities would be on a group that would have clear division of tasks and the role of responsibility, so that it would work smoothly and that one person would not be too stressed.

Local authority representative from City of Espoo
Department for Social Services
/ (unit for immigration services)

The authorities are aware of the need to improve collaboration with immigrant associations. The main reasons for the vague cooperation have been partly to do with a lack of information about immigrant associations. The sharing of information can be seen as a general problem for the associations. According to the authorities the information they receive from the associations differs from case to case. Some associations regularly send information about their activities to the authorities, whereas others hardly send any information or only to one person (who cannot represent all institutions). Nevertheless, the authorities pointed out that the exchange of information has become more stable among those associations which send information regularly to the municipalities.

Another obstacle that may need more attention is the varying opinions between local authorities and immigrant associations of the type of activities which should be supported by the authorities. For example, the integration law underlines the preservation of the culture of the immigrant. Furthermore, it is understandable that immigrants (or refugees) have a strong interest to improve the living conditions of their country men who suffer from poor socio-economic conditions or from political conflicts.

SS-B: *What kind of conflicts have there been between immigrant associations and you?*

Interviewee: *The point of view regarding where they should get counselling. For example immigrant associations working with refugee issues are interested in developing tasks, such as human rights and residence permit issues, whereas the municipality wants to serve inhabitants with immigrant background only within the frame of the “municipal sphere of authority”*

City of Espoo coordinator for immigration issues

Beyond the obstacle of cultural perceptions there is also differences related to gender. It should be noted that the majority of local authorities working with immigration are women, while the immigrant representatives among are often men. The local authorities have also tried to take up the issue and get some changes, but without much success.

In ESF-projects the local authorities have taken up the issue of including women in group work, for example in learning Finnish, and that men could stay at home and take care of the children during the time when they are not working. It was a hot topic that the members from the associations wanted to end before it had even started. I hope that the attitudes have changed since then and it is possible to peacefully discuss the roles of women and men, because there are lots of conflicts in the role expectations between adults and between generations.

Local authority of City of Espoo Department for Social Services
/ (unit for immigration services)

According to the authorities, the conflicts were mainly misunderstandings, which were possible to solve by negotiation. This has been important in particular when immigrants had either misunderstood or forgotten to give all details which were required for accountancy. Therefore, the authorities were used to discussing and thoroughly explaining all details with the immigrants. One authority representative mentioned that it is possible to follow the bookkeeping of projects by going through all the invoices for the

project. Neither was the experience uncommon for the authorities to jointly complete applications with the immigrants. City of Espoo has also organised a project for immigrant association which principally focused on organisation management of voluntary associations. Social workers from the *Helsinki City Social Services Department* have pointed out that there is still lots' of tacit knowledge that is familiar to authorities but has remained unfamiliar for immigrants (Huotari and Härkönen 2005:42). Furthermore, the expectations of immigrants do not always meet the perceptions of social workers.

7.4 The National Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations – ETNO

At the beginning of the 1990's, migration issues became an important issue at the state level due to increased immigration. In 1998, the former 'Advisory Board for Refugee and Migration Affairs'⁹⁹ (*Pakolais-ja siirtolaisasiain neuvottelukunta* – PAKSI) was replaced by 'Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations – ETNO', by putting emphasis on both migration and ethnic relations.

The main role of the advisory board is to make statements on ethnic relations and immigration issues to ministries and other civil servants. ETNO can be defined as a national multi-level consultative expert organ, which gives statements on issues relating to refugee and immigration policy as well as on racism and ethnic relations. The role of the advisory board has been influenced by a previous programme against racism and discrimination which was coordinated by the Council of Europe in 1997. Further issues which influenced the function and composition of the advisory board were the increasing immigration to Finland, the Immigration Act, (L 493/1999) and the new Constitution of Finland (L 731/1999) which came into force in 2000.

99 In 1998, the council of State appointed the 'Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations – ETNO' for a three year period (1998-2000). This was the first national advisory board that included refugee, migration and ethnic relations. Before ETNO, there had been the 'Migration Commission' (*Siirtolaisasiain neuvottelukunta* – SAN) which had focused especially on emigration issues in the 1970s. Later the board was merged with the 'Advisory board for Refugee Affairs' (Refugee Commission) to become the 'Advisory Board for Refugee and Migration Affairs' (*Pakolais-ja siirtolaisasiain neuvottelukunta* – PAKSI). The Ministry of Labour was in charge of PAKSI together with Ministry of Health and Social Affairs.

Structure of ETNO until the end of 2004

The advisory board consisted of both a general board and of divisions representing the main issues. The divisions have had an important role in gathering information on the interests and needs of ethnic groups as well as in the sharing of information of work done by policy makers. The main division that worked under the first and second period were the *Working Division*, *The Division of Education*, and the *Division for Women*. The two latter divisions were replaced during the second period by 'The Family and Immigrant Women's Division'. Other divisions during the 1st period of ETNO were divisions for *Multicultural Affairs* and another for the *Rights of Ethnic Minorities*. These were replaced in the 2nd period by *Division of Racism and Ethnic Relations*. During the first period there were also the division for *Statistics and Research* and for *Finnish Emigrants*. Additionally, during the 2nd period, two ad hoc groups were established: one for the Russian speakers and another for integration. (Lepola and Suurpää 2003:14).

During the 2nd period the board consisted of 57 members; three chairmen, 27 regular members and their 27 personal deputies. During 2001-2004 the board consisted of members from the main ministries working with Immigration Affairs, such as the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Social and Health Affairs, Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Education but also members from the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Other partners included partners such as: 'The Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities' (*Suomen Kuntaliitto*), 'Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland' (*Suomen Evankelisluterilainen kirkko*), 'The Confederation of Finnish Industries EK' (*Teollisuus ja Työnantajat, Palvelutyönantajat*), 'The Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions' (*Suomen Ammattiliittojen Keskusjärjestö – SAK*), 'AKAVA – The Confederation of Unions for Academic Professionals in Finland', 'The Finland Society' (*Suomi Seura ry*), 'The Swedish Assembly of Finland' (*Svenska Finlands Folkting*), 'The Finnish Red Cross' (*Suomen Punainen Risti*), 'The Finnish Refugee Advice Centre' (*Pakolaisneuvonta*), 'Institute of Migration' (*Siirtolaisinstituutti*) and 'The Family Federation of Finland' (*Väestöliitto*), (Lepola and Suurpää 2003).

Representation of ethnic minorities in ETNO until the end of 2004

A common problem in constitutional institutions is to find a democratic way of representation. ETNO also faced a problem with this issue and decided to elect their members on a language and ethnicity basis. The following communities had their representatives in ETNO: Ingrians, the Jewish congregation in Helsinki, the Finnish Islamic congregation (Finnish Tatar community), Arabic speakers, English speakers, “Yugoslav” speaking, French speakers, Somali speakers, Russian speakers, Vietnamese speakers and Kurdish-speaking immigrants. It should be underlined that the members were not elected only on the basis of biggest language groups but also on their specific position, such as Somali and Kurdish refugees. The “Yugoslav speaking” (mentioned in quotation marks) referred to the refugees and to the unstable political situation in the former Yugoslavia. The Swedish-speaking population in Finland was represented by the Swedish Assembly of Finland. The Roma have their own advisory board and have therefore not been included in ETNO. (Lepola and Suurpää 2003).

Both the responses received from the members of the former ETNO and the report done by Lepola and Suurpää (2003) showed that there had been ambiguity in the decision making of which language groups should have been represented. One of the main reasons for electing members on a linguistic basis was that the representation of ethnic minorities could not be based on the existing immigrant associations because they were very small, scattered, and they focused on the political conflicts in their homeland (Lepola and Suurpää 2003:5). This in turn made it difficult for the advisory board to choose suitable associations. Over time, it proved that the linguistic representation of ethnic members did not work equally and a more even geographical representation was needed. Therefore, the idea of local advisory boards gained popularity. Furthermore, by the end of the 1990s the number of immigrant associations had increased (Saksela 2003, 2005).

There was also some ambiguity with the election of members to the divisions. According to a member of the former ETNO, the election was not based on elections but on a discussion among the core members of who had been coordinating the establishment of the divisions. For example, some of the board members were elected without their presence in the meeting.

Interviewer: When were you chosen for the chairman position?

Interviewee: During 1998. In 1998 it was created. --- [A]s I was putting forward my ideas and put it parallel to education then they realized that: "Well, yeah I think that could be a good idea. But then who could be able to lead this kind of this thing?" And so then someone, anyway, I don't know who put my name on the proposal. --- Actually, I was surprised that they didn't even ask me! They just took my name. "Bob"¹⁰⁰ called me and told me - you could be this person.

Member of ETNO during the 2nd period, (C)

Another former board member had also been elected as a representative of her ethnic group, without her presence in the meeting organised by local authorities added:

[T]here was some kind of big meeting organised by the authorities where lots Kurds, Arabs, Somalis and Iranians where invited. Then one asked: "who will represent "XX group?". I was not there but they suggested me. They know. They called me in the evening.

A member of the former ETNO, (0601)

The above mentioned examples describe the ambiguity of the election process of ethnic members to the board. The vague criteria on representation of ethnic minorities on the basis of the biggest language groups had not worked as an equal tool for representation of the voices of ethnic minorities and small immigrant groups. Additionally, the election of persons as representatives without asking their opinion portrays something about the unclear nature of the rules of the election of members. Furthermore, in the creation of constitutional institutions, such as ETNO, an official election process could have improved its function and achievements of its goals. An advisory board has an important place in a society as a 'privileged channel to the decision making process,' although these do not exercise any concrete political power in decision making process (see also Andersen 1990).

100 The name has been changed for the protection of privacy.

Activities of the ETNO during the 1st and 2nd period

During the 1st period, the division of 'Multicultural Affairs' sent its members a questionnaire of existing problems and issues of interest related to the ethnic group they represented. The aim was to explore internal and external issues influencing the maintenance of the ethnic groups' culture of origin. According to the answers, the ethnic groups were most worried about how to maintain their native language and culture. They emphasised the need to support youths who are growing up between two cultures. (ETNO 2002). As a consequence, the State Council accepted an action programme for the improvement of ethnic equality and diversity¹⁰¹.

The 2nd period of ETNO (2001-2004) focused mainly on the follow-up of the integration programme, especially on the distribution of information for local authorities working with immigrants (ETNO 30.10.2001, ETNO 2004a, ETNO 12.2.2004). The 'Division for Family and Immigrant Women' focused their activities on the improvement of immigrant women' and youths' living conditions. One of their main achievements was the organisation of Immigrant Women's Day in 2002 at the International Cultural Centre – Caissa. This was very popular and was followed by regional workshops around the country. Another important activity form was the so called "School Forum"¹⁰² (koulufoorumi). Here, the aim was to explore the collaboration between multicultural families and schools. A special emphasis was given to the perceptions of youth and their parents on issues, such as youth culture, adulthood and education. During the second period of ETNO, the division also charted the older immigrants' integration into Finnish society. This was part of a thematic project called "Equal old age"¹⁰³ (*Tasa-arvoinen vanhuus*) (ETNO/Perhejaosto 2002, ETNO 2004b).

The Division for Family and Immigrant Women participated in a Nordic immigrant women's forum organised in Malmö by the Swedish immigrant women's association *RIFFI – Riksförbundet Internationella Föreningen för Invandrarkvinnor*. Before this conference, several immigrant women's

101 In Finnish: 'Kohti etnistä yhdenvertaisuutta ja monimuotoisuutta – Hallituksen etnisen syrjinnän ja rasmin vastainen toimintaohjelma'.

102 Free translation by the author.

103 Free translation by the author.

associations were contacted in Finland who joined the division for the conference. The idea for the conference was to improve the position and visibility of immigrant women and their associations (ETNO 2003). Additionally, the idea was to increase collaboration between the (Finnish) women's associations and immigrant women's associations:

Well, in practice all, who were members of the division, were also more or less members of one or several associations. We did a lot of cooperation with associations. For example, we were quite often in cooperation during the time when we chose people to this meeting in Malmö. As far as I know, we have not done any division with the associations that there should be [members]¹⁰⁴ from immigrant associations. One of our goals was to make women's associations aware of the living conditions of immigrant women. Therefore we invited several women's associations to the seminar...

Member of ETNO during the 2nd period (A_0602)

The divisions had fairly little collaboration with the immigrant associations despite its numerous activities. One negative aspect was the risk of competition between associations to get subsidies as well as the difficulty of finding an equal way of including associations in the policy making committees (see also Young 2000). The institutional impact on the associations is partly to do with EU-policy. The European Commission has emphasized the 'subsidiarity principle'¹⁰⁵ in the form of cooperation between formal and informal organisations (Helander 1998, Luomala 2003).

The other ad hoc working group was focusing on integration. This was established by the board, because of the new integration law that came into force in 1999. The idea was to follow its practical impact in the work of authorities as well as its importance to the immigrants. Its main tasks consisted

104 Added by the author.

105 The subsidiarity standard is one of the core principles in EU policy-making, 'laying down that political decisions in the EU must always be taken at the lowest possible administrative and political level, and as close to the citizens as possible. Other than the areas where the EU has exclusive competence, this means that the EU can only act if it would be better to implement the legislation in question at EU rather than at national, regional or local level'. (For further info see: Folketingets EU-Oplysnin. http://www.eu-oplysningen.dk/euo_en/spsv/all/61/)

of the follow-up of the integration law in issues such as information, education, participation and labour. Furthermore, the group studied what the existing opportunities were for immigrants to participate in Finnish society. It appeared that political participation and membership in trade unions was very low. The latter was partly explained by low employment among immigrants (see also Kala Kuivalla Maalla 2005). A former member of the group highlighted that in future it would be important to achieve better organisation and empowerment of the immigrants and their associations. According to him, this depends much on the individual interests:

Oh well, there is still today at least one kind of problem; it is the empowerment of immigrant associations. It is really weak in Finland! We do not have an umbrella association, so that we could inform and develop them. Only these small associations --- And we stated that this kind of "process" depends quite much on the person himself, but also on the opportunity. We also stated that, even today there is a lot to do to get the immigrants voice heard – I don't say that it is weak, but, eh, there is quite much that could be improved

Member of ETNO during the 2nd period (B)

The ad hoc group underlined that in the integration process, it is a question of an individual process and not of a collective one. Immigrants should not be perceived as a homogenous group. The interviewee pointed out that integration cannot be achieved by a top-down ideology where authorities coordinate the inclusion of immigrants. According to him it should be seen as a reciprocal process where the immigrant actively takes part. (Member of ETNO during the 2nd period (B), see also Kala Kuivalla Maalla 2005).

ETNO's Reconstruction

In the minutes of the meetings from ETNO it appeared that there were problems in the election of members: There were no clear criteria how members should be elected and represented, the election of members on the basis of language was not a sufficient criteria and as a proposal, the division of multicultural affairs suggested an election from immigrant associations (ETNO, 06.11.2004). This in turn, created new problems, because there were

only few immigrant associations and these are not always based on ethnicity. Further criteria were based on the composition of ETNO. It was claimed that the board was too large to work efficiently on specific issues and therefore a decrease in the sized of the board was to be taken into reconsideration. In addition, the members of the division of 'multicultural affairs' pointed out the need of including members from parishes, humanitarian and solidarity organisations. It was suggested that the establishment of a new national ETNO, which would in turn establish regional advisory boards (ETNO, 06.11.2004, see also Työministeriö, 26.5.2004). The focus would be more on the inclusion of immigrant associations.

At the beginning of the 3rd period of ETNO a new composition took place¹⁰⁶. The State Council appointed the advisory board for a further three year period from 05/2005 to 05/2007. Representatives of immigrant associations and ethnic minority groups were chosen from proposed candidates. Another novel form was the inclusion of representatives from political parties as ETNO members. The third period of ETNO included both structural and functional changes. The aim was to strengthen the democratic inclusion of ethnic minorities. The core objectives were to 1) improve ethnic relations and interaction between different actors working with immigration issues, 2) work as an expert body in the development of immigration issues, 3) participate in the improvement of the associational life of immigrants and 4) to inform (Finnish society) of immigration politics and to make Finnish society familiar with issues concerning ethnic diversity (Valtioneuvoston asetus, 10.02.2005).

7.5 Inclusive Modes of Cooperation: Illusion or Reality?

The following sub chapter looks at the relationship between the governmental actors and the immigrant associations, i.e. focuses on the opportunities of

106 Since the 3rd period of ETNO, its structure has been changed and it now consists of four sections located in the East, West, North and Central Finland. So far there is no regional division for South Finland due existing multicultural advisory boards working in the Helsinki metropolitan area. Immigrant associations and political parties have been included in the 3rd period of ETNO. The aim is to follow the same structure in the future. The associations are mainly represented in the regional sub-divisions of ETNO. The chosen associations consist mainly of multi-ethnic associations and of associations representing the biggest foreign languages, such as Somali and Russian.

immigrant associations to participate in their receiving society. Once again, the mobilisation model of Tilly, with some additional features, can be useful for finding an answer to immigrant associations' opportunities to participate and represent themselves. In Tilly's model, the focus was on interests, organisation, mobilisation, collective action, and on opportunities. In the exploration of the resource mobilisation of immigrant associations, I redefined the concept of organisation to 'self-organisation' and added the concept of 'descriptive representation' (see Weldon 2006).

In the exploration of the top-down view, the core concepts of the analysis still consist of self-organisation and the concept of descriptive representation, although the role of these concepts will also remain secondary. Instead, the focus turns to opportunity and inclusive political communication. Tilly defines *opportunity* as 'the relationship between the population's interests and the current state of the world around it.' The *institutional political communication* can be described as actions of the government and municipalities to include representatives in political communication arenas. At this stage of the study, the importance is on the level of inclusion of immigrant groups and associations into planning and (decision making)¹⁰⁷ forums, such as advisory boards and working groups. For example, do small immigrant associations have as equal opportunity as the bigger associations to represent their interests? This study cannot give a complete answer to this question, but it can clarify the role of institutional actors in the organisation process of immigrant associations.

In the following sub chapter the focus will be entirely on top-down dimensions, such as the facilitating or restricting features guiding the immigrant associations' opportunities to participate or represent their interest in Finnish society.

Hypothesis 2: *The opportunities of an immigrant association to reach societal integration of its members, increases if its goals are in line with the integrative initiatives of institutional actors. The forms of power relation between an immigrant association and local authorities are dependent on the engagement of an immigrant association and on the activities of institutional actors.*

107 It should be noticed, that advisory boards do not exercise any direct form of decision making.

7.5.1 Four descriptions of institutional interactivity

		Levels of engagement of immigrant associations	
		Low	High
Initiatives of institutional actors	Reactive	Informative	Consultative
	Interactive	Collaborative	Decision making

Figure 7.5.1 Forms of interaction between immigrant associations and institutional actors

Hypothesis 2 is illustrated by the following four descriptions (see also Figure 7.5.1), which shows how collective action is guided by reactive (passive) or interactive (active) initiatives of institutional actors.

Description 1 Informative

The upper-left hand corner exemplifies the lowest level of participation. At this level, decision making is done by civil servants behind closed doors and later informed to the immigrants and their associations (see also Gaventa 2007:26). Information sharing can be described as the most reactive form of participation (van der Waldt 2007:30). For example, the level of participation between immigrant associations and *the Finnish National Board of Education* can be described as reactive, where the boards invites immigrant associations to seminars where they receive information of the Board of Education.

Description 2. Consultative

The next step towards more interactive participation is consultation of integrative issues to immigrant associations by local authorities working (often) with integrative projects (see also van der Waldt 2007:30). Consultation appears to be the most used form of interaction: more or less half of the thirty-two studied associations belong into the category of ‘consultative partnership’. In 2002, only three associations mentioned more than three contacts with civil servants (consisting of Ministries and the Employment Office, amongst others) (Saksela 2003:263). Additionally, members of the immigrant associations

interviewed in 2003-2005 pointed out that the nature of participation was mostly the receiving of information.

Co-ordinators of integration issues in the three municipalities highlighted their role as providers of consultation relating to practical issues, such as how to complete or write a proposal for funding (Saksela 2005). This kind of help is valuable for the immigrant associations despite the fact that the members from the immigrant associations cannot take part in how integrative projects are planned or have an influence on the conditions for subsidy sharing. The majority of immigrant associations contacted in this study had received some kind of information from civil servants.

Description 3. Collaborative

A more inclusive form of participation can be described as 'collaboration' and as 'co-agenda setting' between two partners (van der Walddt 2007:31). Participation can be more equal if immigrant associations are invited as partners in the planning of integrative issues, such as in the local advisory board for multicultural issues in the municipalities of Espoo and Vantaa. Furthermore, an immigrant associations' position in Finnish civil society becomes stronger if these associations can make an agenda of common targets together with local authorities.

Diverse multicultural projects are good examples of an attempt towards more equal participation. A good example is the Majakka Beacon project, which was co-ordinated by the Rehabilitation Foundation with the aim of improving the Somalis and Kurds employment opportunities (Interviewee AA, WB1, Annual report of the Somali League of Finland 2007). Other examples are integrative projects organised by local authorities in the three municipalities. Some of these projects focussed in particularly on the improvement of immigrant associations' organisational skills, such as the TAAKULO and the SAAXIB projects organised by the municipality of Espoo. Instead, the planning of these projects had mainly been in the hands of local authorities (see also 7.2.1). Unfortunately, not all joint projects were perceived positively by the members of immigrant associations. Representatives from immigrant associations complained that they were left outside the planning of

projects and were taken only as passive clients (Saksela 2005). In other words, interactive participation is definitely a step towards a more equal initiatives, but cannot create new actions and changes if the needs of the target group are not heard. Gaventa argues that:

The transformative potential of spaces for participatory governance must always be assessed in relationship to the other spaces which surround them. Creation of new institutional designs of participatory governances, in the absence of other participatory spaces which serve to provide and sustain countervailing power, might simply be captured by the already empowered elite.

Gaventa (2007:27)

Description 4. Participative decision making

The most interactive form of participation is participative decision making in the decision making space itself (van der waltd 2007:31, Gaventa 2007:26). In this study, the so called “power space” consists of an invented space among actors who have the power to make decisions on integrative issues. For example, the members of advisory boards are in the core position to decide if, how and what kind of immigrant associations can be included in an advisory board. These members do not necessarily make any final decisions or rules on integrative issues, but they can influence with their presence and by voting for or against who can get access to the advisory board, such as the case has been in ETNO.

One of the most challenging issues in civic participation is to create a forum for ‘inclusive communication’ or equal access or for all citizens (Weldon 2006, Young 2002). As the case of the Advisory Board for Foreigners showed, it had not yet decided in 2004 how to, and if to, include immigrant associations on their board. Once again, the proactive step to take by local authorities towards the level of mutual decision making has been perceived as too high. Another question is if mutual decision making is always the right solution. An improvement in the inclusive (political) communication could be achieved if on the one hand the immigrant associations could improve their descriptive representation, and, on the other, the civil servants would organise advisory

boards based on the election of candidates with an immigrant background.

I did not find any form of partnership where immigrant associations and local authorities would share an equal decision making power, which can be partly explained by the fact that the project initiatives came from top-down (Saksela 2005). An example of small scale equal partnership can consist of a joint activity between immigrant and Finnish voluntary associations. For example, the Kanava youth association has organised for its members first aid courses together with the Finnish Red Cross (Kaikkonen 2003:28). The Finnish Red Cross has also organised integrative activities for immigrants and refugees together with immigrant associations in their 'Kotopolku' project (see also Kotopolku). The Kotopolku project is based on equal partnership where immigrant associations take part in both the planning and the decision making process. During the data collection for the charting of immigrant associations there were very few contacts between immigrant associations and Finnish voluntary associations, but the relationship between various immigrant associations have intensified during the last few years (see also Zakeri and Tuunainen 2007).

7.5.2 Representation through access and presence

The previous sub chapter discussed how the institutional actors' initiatives can guide the participation of immigrant associations. This sub chapter describes how both the self-organisation and the *descriptive representation* of immigrant associations plays a role in their a) inclusion in planning and decision making bodies and b) cooperation between other immigrant associations. In other words, the opportunities of an association to be present in the planning of integrative activities depend of its members' ability to be physically present in meetings and to express themselves. It is by access to, and presence in official bodies that the representatives of immigrant associations can express their interest and needs. Additionally, the immigrant associations can strengthen their position by cooperation with other immigrant associations, which also depends on the associations' descriptive representation. Weldon argues:

Without descriptive representation (the physical presence of members of marginalised groups) there are no members of the group who can

self-organize, develop and articulate the minority group perspectives. Descriptive representation or bodily presence of members of marginalized groups helps to ensure that the final product reflects the perspective of the marginalized group, while also conferring legitimacy on the proceedings

Weldon 2006:56

Her argument is of importance also in the analysis of immigrant associations' opportunities to participate and represent their ethnic group members in Finnish society. The following six descriptions show how the outcome of collective action depends on the immigrant associations members' interests to represent their association in an *ideological* way (the goals of the association) and in a *legitimate* way (such as by registration), and by the *presence* of members in decision making process (or in other formal venues).

Six descriptions of getting access and of being present

Description 1. Lack of awareness of being present

The weakest self-organisation and descriptive representation takes place among networks and unregistered associations. The National Association for Sierra Leone exemplifies an ethno-cultural association, whose organisation and descriptive representation was more reminiscent of a network than of an association. During the data collection, it had not yet registered and had only a few activities going partly due to lack of financial resources, contacts and the small number of members (15 members) (Saksela 2003:256, unpublished data). In other words, this association lacked both legitimacy and presence of its members in formal venues. The Ibo Residents association was another unregistered ethno-cultural association but in comparison with the former associations, this one had a fairly extended network consisting of 120 members. Common for both associations were their lack of contact with other immigrant associations and lack of participation with Finnish voluntary associations, local authorities and subsidy providers. The low descriptive representation can be interpreted as an unawareness of the importance of being present in civic activities outside the own ethnic association. Similar forms of unawareness

had also taken place among the immigrant women's associations during the first years of the associations (see also sub chapter 6.3). The above mentioned associations did not show any signs of mobilisation of their ethnic group members, which would have strengthened the achievement of their goals in a form of collective action.

Description 2. *Lack of presence*

Common for newly registered immigrant associations is their weak self-description and problems with descriptive representation. Several immigrant associations have a lack of presence but are aware of the importance to participate, or at least of the significance to keep in contact with other immigrant associations and members from the majority population, including subsidy providers. For example, a member of a Kurdish women's association pointed out that if they had Finns who could help them with writing of applications then the possibility to get finance would most likely increase and would enable them to organise activities (Interviewee WB 1:2)

The problem with young immigrant associations is their lack of contacts and access to formal venues, such as projects and advisory boards. For example, from the time of registration, both the ZIWAR and the Iraqi women's association had been motivated to create contact with both with local authorities and other immigrant and Finnish voluntary associations. The Iraqi women's association was in a better position than ZIWAR, because of the formers cooperation with an older and bigger Kurdish association, the IRTY (*Irakin ja Iranin Työllistymisyhdistys ry.*). After a couple of years both associations had re-focussed their ideological goals towards helping immigrant women and had also created contacts with other immigrant women's associations and with local authorities. The new contacts had enabled their participation in seminars and projects organised by the civil servants. The participation in activities organised by civil servants can be called 'partial presence'.

Description 3. *Partial presence*

Immigrant associations with partial presence are the ones with a clear ideological goal, legitimacy and contacts with actors who provide them with a more visible place in the Finnish civil society (see also 7.4). The use of ethnic

resources was emphasised in the organisation of activities. Nevertheless, partial presence has already helped the immigrant associations to achieve mobilisation in some cases. For example, the two youth associations, the Somali Kanava and the Russian speaking Sadko Club had created good relationships with other mono-ethnic associations representing their language group. The Kanava and the Sadko Clubs received resources in the form of information and help with management of activities from bigger ethnic associations, amongst others. The support provided by the other associations improved the two associations' possibilities of getting subsidies, which in turn enabled the mobilisation of youth (who were spending their time on the street). The collective action can be described as a form of members' joint participation in associational activities, such as football matches and art courses. Both activity forms focussed on strengthening the ethnic identity among youth.

Description 4. *Partial partnership*

A partial partnership can also take place between immigrant associations. Some mono-ethnic associations had been asked to take part in a joint project application co-ordinated by bigger immigrant associations. The problem was often two-fold: on the one hand, the smaller associations had either not been taken as a partner in the project itself after the subsidy was given (Interviewee WC1). On the other, these smaller associations did not get their voice heard in the realisation of projects/activities (Interviewee WD1). An additional problem is that local authorities ask for the expertise of immigrant associations in the planning of integrative projects, but had not taken the associations as their partners (Interviewee 23a). This created disappointment among the immigrants, who interpreted the reaction of authorities as a lack of trust of members' skills (Saksela 2005).

Description 5. *Partnership based of on access to decision making*

The data showed only one type of equal partnership were immigrant associations have *access* to the decision making namely projects co-ordinated by themselves together with other immigrant associations and transnational projects done together with other voluntary associations in the immigrants' homeland. For example, the immigrant women's network, which is co-

ordinated by the AFROCAREWO association, enables the planning and decision making of issues inside and between the associations. This kind of networking challenges the members to be committed in the project tasks and at the same time to devote some time and energy to it.

Description 6. *Equal partnership based on mutual decision making*

The previous example also included another important dimension in decision making, namely the *presence* of members in the concrete decision making process. I do not have evidence if the members representing the associations of the women's network take part in the decision making process, but at least this kind of networking could be based on equal partnership.

7.6 Summary and Discussion

The chapter has discussed the relations between immigrant associations and the institutional actors. Additionally, the contacts between immigrant associations and Finnish voluntary associations have been explored. The focus has been on immigrant associations' participation in integrative activities organised by local authorities and on immigrant associations opportunities to represent their ethnic group members' interest in local and national advisory boards. Attention was given to the integrative agenda, such as the integration act, division of integrative tasks between civil servants and their initiatives were discussed. In addition, the perceptions of civil servants on immigrant associations' aims were explored. The answer of the Research Question 3 and 4 worked as valuable background information for the main Research Questions 5 and 6 of this study.

The Research Question 5 studied how the institutional initiatives guided the engagement of immigrant associations in the activities of local authorities. The institutional initiatives can be describes as a form of power, which was expressed by the institutional actors either in a reactive or in an interactive way. This was discussed in sub chapter 7.5.1. The Research Question 6 was studied with help of features of the ethnic resource mobilisation, such as the level of self-organisation of immigrant associations and their descriptive representation, which were discussed in sub chapter 7.5.2. The latter paid

attention to the associations' opportunities to be included to local and advisory boards. In addition, it studied the collaboration between immigrant associations. Features of institutional channelling approach, such as the structure and function of ETNO of the National Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations – ETNO, were also discussed. The function and composition of the board showed that immigrant associations had not been included to it until the 3rd period of ETNO.

The sub chapter 7.1 showed that solidarity and humanitarian organisations play an important role as mediators between Finnish society and immigrant associations. Furthermore, these associations work as collaborative partners with immigrant associations in the planning of integrative activities. Finnish voluntary associations also have the know-how of Finnish civil society that can be valuable for immigrants in their organisation of associational activities. Multicultural associations organised by the majority population aim to improve the inclusion of immigrants into Finnish society by providing them a meeting place and by offering premises for their associations. Additionally, multicultural associations are important venues for immigrants and the majority population for organising ethno- and multicultural activities, such as seminars and festivals. Cooperation and networking between Finnish voluntary associations and immigrant associations has remained fairly modest and their emphasis has mainly been on activities with the goal of including immigrants into Finnish society.

The institutional actors working with immigration issues in municipalities and at national level have taken initiatives to collaborate with immigrant associations. The collaboration takes place mainly through projects focussing on societal integration. In other words, several of these joint projects aim to include immigrants in the socio-economic domain of Finland. At the beginning of this decade the cooperation was still taking shape between local authorities and immigrant associations in the Helsinki metropolitan area.

The development of integrative models, such as the integration programme and individual integration plans in Espoo, Vantaa and Helsinki have followed more or less the same structure and time span. Integration policy was shaped from the 1990s to the beginning of the 21st century. Helsinki had already

started organising integrative projects for immigrants and refugees at the beginning of 1990s but its cooperation with immigrant associations only started in 1998 during a project focusing on the employment of immigrants (SISU-Integra project). In 2000, the city of Espoo received financing from the European Social Fund to organise two projects, (Taakulo and Saaxib), which focused on the integration of immigrants and also included cooperation with immigrant associations. The city of Vantaa has organised integrative projects together with refugee and immigrant associations since 1996. These projects have aimed to empower immigrant women and children amongst others.

According to local authorities from the three municipalities there was a wish to have more cooperation with immigrant associations but this has been difficult due to lack of information of existing immigrant associations and also due to time constraints. Immigrants cannot always take part in meetings organised during day time due to work commitments, whereas authorities are not motivated to organise their meetings outside their own working hours. Local advisory boards in Espoo and Vantaa also had representatives of immigrant associations in their working groups. The immigrant associations could participate in the planning of integrative issues but not in the decision making process. In 2004, Helsinki was still looking for the most equal way of including immigrant associations on its board. It is difficult to find a democratic way in the election of immigrant associations into advisory boards due to their small size and scattered location in the municipalities. A similar problem also exists in the national advisory board for ethnic relations – ETNO. The members were elected on a language basis during the first and second period of ETNO. It was also surprising that the representatives for language groups had been, in some cases, elected without the actual presence of the member. Cooperation between immigrant associations and ETNO hardly existed until the third period when the board was restructured. Since 2005, immigrant associations and members of political parties have been included on the board. Even today the election of immigrant associations is not problem free and still struggles to find a way for the equal representation of ethnic minorities.

Immigrant associations and civil servants find cooperation as an important tool for improving the integration of immigrants into Finnish society.

Nevertheless, both faced some problems with the cooperation and the visibility of immigrant associations. Immigrant associations faced problems mainly with self-organisation of the association, such as with management of a voluntary association and with time management among its members. Several members of the associations are occupied either with work, education programmes or with small children and therefore the coordination of agendas is difficult. Furthermore, financing was mentioned together with lack of premises as their main problems.

Members of immigrant associations and local authorities both highlighted the need to improve the exchange of information. Several immigrant associations face a problem with writing applications due to the lack of sufficient Finnish skills or due to the bureaucratic language of the application requirements. Local authorities working in the social service departments of the three cities try to provide help with the application procedure. A further problem for the immigrant associations is their weak representation. This has partly to do with the general mismanagement of an association but also due to the lack of information about Finnish civil society. The Chairs of immigrant associations pointed out the need to get more information about other actors working in Finnish civil society, such as local authorities and Finnish voluntary associations. They also mentioned the need to create contacts with the majority population to strengthen their members' inclusion into society. For example the Ingrians and Somalis, amongst others, were worried about the possible marginalisation of youth and children.

8 Conclusion

Since the late 1980s immigration to Finland started to increase. This was followed by the main integrative actions, which took place from the mid 1990s until the beginning of 2000. This time period also became interesting for the analysis of the organisational process of immigrant associations in the Metropolitan area of Finland (Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa).

The aim of this study has been two-fold. On the one hand the focus has been on the role of immigrant associations in the societal integration process of immigrants into Finnish society. On the other, the focus has been on the political integrative aims of immigrant associations taking place in the Helsinki metropolitan area. This study attempts to provide a descriptive illustration of the organisational landscape of immigrant associations and an analytical exploration of the connection between the institutional setting and immigrant associations.

This study started with an analysis of ethnic, organisational and institutional background features, which influence the organisation of immigrants in associations and their participation and representation in Finnish society. Research Questions 1 and 2 dealt with relations and activities of the grassroots actors. An illustration of immigrant associations' organisational landscape was done by studying the motives of immigrants to establish associations and secondly by exploring how immigrants manage to operate their associations. The first aim of the Research Question 2 was to look at the immigrant (women's) associations' efforts to engage their ethnic group members in civic activities. The other aim of the second question was to explore the importance of ethnic identity, such as how the members emphasised their ethnic background, culture and language in their organisation of associational activities. Attention was also paid to immigrant women's motives and opportunities for associational organisation. In both parts of Research Question 2, I paid attention to the internal and external features influencing the mobilisation process. Features, such as interests, resources and collective action were analysed in more detail.

Research Questions 3 and 4 explored the agenda of the governmental and municipal actors and their perceptions of immigrant associations' aims. The integrative agenda of civil servants consisted of legislation and working tasks guiding their work and influencing the civil servants' perceptions of immigrant associations. Research Questions 5 and 6 studied the political integrative aims of immigrant associations, i.e. how they were included in projects and advisory boards of the municipalities, amongst others. These questions were explored with help of features of interaction, such as the integration (levels of inclusion into Finnish society), societal sphere, forms of interaction and informal and formal channels. In the analysis of forms of interaction, I attempted to take into account the institutional design guiding immigrant associational practices.

Data coding

The analysis of the six research questions was done in small analytical sections during and after an exploration of a research setting. The coding was done by so called sensitive conceptualisation (Hoonaard, van den 1997). In this study the aim of coding has been to reinforce the holistic explanation, i.e. to show how the self-organisation of an association is connected to the institutional governance of immigrant associations in Finnish society. The data of each research setting was split into core thematic categories. This was followed by sensitive conceptualisation, which offered novel insights finding sub topics related to the organisational process of immigrant associations. Additionally, these sub categories clarified how the immigrant associations were perceived by the institutional actors. During the research process, so called substantive concepts or immediate and practical core concepts emerged from the data. For example, the interviewees pointed out issues, such as the 'lack of knowledge', 'social togetherness' and 'passivity/activity of immigrants', etc. The core concepts helped to draw connections with the more abstract, theoretical concepts such as 'collective action', 'resource mobilisation' and 'institutional channelling'. A triangulation of data, core concepts and theory displayed how immigrant associations have found their place in Finnish civil society and beyond.

Data analysis

The analysis of the data has been done concurrently with the data collection described in Chapter 4. The analysis can be divided into five main steps. Firstly, I became familiar with the interview context by listening to the tapes and by transcribing them. Secondly, I read through the transcribed interviews and got a more insightful illustration of the structure and function of the immigrant associations. Interviews conducted for the charting of immigrant associations were systematically gone through by reading through each telephone interview followed by a comparison of the thematic topics of the twenty-four interviews with each other. Thirdly, I looked for topics of particular interest expressed by the interviewees and categorised these topics thematically (see section 'data coding'). Fourthly, I compared the answers of the thematic questions received both from the charting of the immigrant associations and from the other half-structured interviews. These topics were rearranged into sub-categories (of which some were later on either reduced or clustered. At this stage I also explored other kinds of data, such as booklets, homepages, memos from events and both official and unofficial reports. This stage was an important step towards a more coherent analytical pattern. I started to see how the empirical data was connected with the hypotheses, which were developed during the analytical process. Fifthly, I looked for interrelations between the categories and also with the theoretical concepts mentioned in the sub chapter 4.4.1. This kind of repetitive familiarisation with the data permitted me to see both strengths and weaknesses of the data and its connectedness with the theoretical framework.

The data has been verified in two ways. I) By comparing the context of interviews with other data related to the same topic, e.g. the description of the structure of an association has been compared with a) the transcribed interviews b) homepages, c) annual activity reports or other available documents. This kind of triangulation of sources provided valuable description of topics related to the research questions. II) By cross-checking topics described by the interviewees during different interview stages. For example, if the activity coordinator focussed on the same problems in the realisation of activities as in his previous interview.

8.1 Empirical Outcomes

The organisational landscape of immigrant associations

The charting of immigrant associations showed that the majority of the immigrant associations were established some time after migration to Finland started to increase, i.e. from the mid 1990s. In 2002, a charting of the fourteen biggest municipalities highlighted that there were 563 associations consisting both of immigrant associations and of the solidarity associations working with immigration issues (see also Saksela 2003). The charting showed that in the Helsinki metropolitan area the number of immigrant associations was 127. The largest number of associations consisted of 28 associations representing the Russians peaking migrants who had migrated to Finland after the dissolution of Soviet Union, 40 Ingrian associations, 40 Somali associations and 21 Kurdish associations.

According to Layton-Henry, (1990) it is possible to differentiate two *different phases of associational development* that are connected with the migration process and by the time that immigrant shave spent in the new receiving country. I have added a supplementary third phase, which takes place when the immigrants have established social networks beyond their ethnic group and are integrated into the labour market. At this phase, it is common that immigrant associations focus their activities on the integration of their children and youth. The results shows that immigrant associations in Finland are between the first and second phase of associational life, but have still strong contacts with their homeland. The data showed that several immigrant associations aim to strengthen inclusion of the immigrant children and youths into Finnish society and to their ethnic culture.

The findings underline that a most of the immigrant associations studied were *integrative* (15 of 32 associations), i.e. these associations aimed to provide access for their members into the Finnish labour market and educational system. At the same time, these associations aimed to maintain or recreate their collective ethnic identity. There were six *societal* associations which aimed to provide only societal services for immigrants, such as counselling, educative courses and sport activities. Eight immigrant associations were classified as ethno-cultural focussing primarily on the maintenance of ethnic identity.

The activities consist of local social get-togethers where the members can exchange news and express themselves in their native language, amongst other things. The members pointed out that ethno-cultural and social activities are important for recently arrived migrants, allowing them to bridge between their cultural practices and their new surroundings. The goal of transnational associations was to improve the living conditions of their countrymen in their homeland. I found only three are “purely” transnational associations. If associations with transnational activities as their secondary goals are included, then the number is eight out of thirty-two associations.

A majority of the financed associations have received subsidies for educative and labour oriented courses, sport activities and other activities focusing on social and health care. In comparison, the ethno-cultural activities had seldom received external financing. The main national subsidy providers are Finland's Slot Machine Association (RAY) and the Ministry of Education. Other small subsidy providers are the social and cultural boards of the municipalities. The problem with the governmental support on societal activities is the risk of crowding out of ethno specific activities, which has already taken place in some of the other European countries, such as the Netherlands and Italy (Poppelaars 2007, Caponio 2005).

The activities of the immigrant associations took place in the societal domain, consisting of socio-economic, cultural and political sub domain. The main activity form in the socio-economic domain consisted of societal services. All societal and integrative immigrant associations organised societal services for their members. The interest of an association to organise societal services can be explained by immigrants' need of knowledge and need of help with educational, employment and social and health care issues. On the other hand, the local authorities and subsidy givers have taken action for the improvement of integration. These actions included financial support, organisation of premises and counselling. The above mentioned reasons partly explained immigrants' lack of interest in focussing on entirely ethno-cultural activities. The representation of political claims making, such as demonstrations and improvement of living-conditions, (e.g. conditions for residence permissions), took place only in a few cases. For example, the

Kurds and Somalis have organised demonstrations and information seminars oriented to the situation in their home countries. Somalis were also the only ethnic group that expressed an interest to have a common representative from the group in local policy making.

The activities organised in the cultural domain were becoming more visible year by year. This can be explained as an increase in cooperation between immigrant associations and Finnish actors, such as Caisa – the International Cultural Centre and Finnish voluntary associations, amongst others. Several of the cultural and social activities of immigrant associations organised in the premises of the municipality, due to the lack of their own premises. For example, the international culture centre, Caisa, was an important sphere of interaction between immigrant associations and for the organisation of cultural and social activities.

Transnational activities were organised mainly by people living in diaspora, such as the Kurds and Somalis. These activities focussed on living conditions in the immigrants' homeland. In other words, the societal domain did not include the transnational activities.

Mobilization of members and strengthening of their identity

The findings show that ethnic identity is created along the migration process and it guides – at least partially – the organisation of associations and activities. The importance of ethnic background was shown in the motives and interests of immigrants to establish or to participate in an association. Beyond ethnicity, other issues such as gender and age also play a role. The Somali and Kurdish members of the immigrant women's associations emphasised the need to have own associations for women where they can discuss of their needs and interest and improve their life situation.

Both mono- and multi-ethnic immigrant associations focused on empowerment of immigrants in different ways. The data revealed that immigrant associations aimed to mobilise their members by different kinds of participation with an empowering goal. The mobilisation took place mainly in three forms: 1) by recreation of the immigrants' ethnic identity. This was emphasised, in particular among youth living between two cultures. 2) By providing mental help; the Chairs and activity coordinators of associations

highlighted the growing need for more resources to provide mental health services, such as peer support, therapy courses and counselling. 3) By sharing information about the labour market, educational courses and health and social services. The analysis of societal activities showed that immigrants can work as important bridge builders between the immigrants and Finnish society. Immigrant associations can often provide help and information in the native language of immigrants and have also a more profound knowledge of the culture, norms and the political situation of the immigrants' homeland. These are all skills that few members of the majority population can provide.

In the exploration of immigrant associations' mobilisation it appeared that there was a growing need to pay attention to youth, immigrant women and elderly immigrants. Some immigrant women, such as the Kurds, Iraqis and Iranians and Somalis, had established their own associations for women only from either their own ethnic group or for women sharing similar cultural background.

The integrative agenda of civil servants and their perceptions of immigrant associations' aims

The integrative aims, such as planning of integrative programmes and directives had started already at the beginning of the 1990s in the Helsinki metropolitan area, but concrete collaborative initiatives did not take place before the end of the 1990s. The legal acts together with the integration programme and the follow up programmes are all institutional tools which have influenced the work of civil servants in Finland. For example, the Government's Account on the Implementation of the Integration Act (VNS 5/2002), underlines the importance of improving the cooperation between civil servants and the third sector, including immigrant associations. According to the civil servants the legal acts and integrative recommendations have created more clarity in the organisation of integration tasks between the authorities. The problem remains in the division of tasks between the municipal level and the third sector: there is still some ambiguity between the tasks of the local authorities and Finnish voluntary associations (See also Saksela 2005).

Civil servants had mainly positive perceptions for their cooperation with immigrant associations. They found immigrant associations important

mediators between the immigrant groups and Finnish society. The associations have given the civil servants a better insight into the current problems and needs of different ethnic groups. The civil servants perceived the role of immigrant associations as peer support by providing counselling and information for the immigrants about the Finnish welfare system. Additionally, some civil servants were interested in the idea of outsourcing some of the social services for the immigrant associations, whereas other ones wanted to keep the expert work separated from the field of voluntary associations. The idea of outsourcing services was partly supported by immigrant associations, but was also met with some scepticism. Immigrants are afraid that their skills are not acknowledged and that they are not seen as equal partners in the realisation of projects. So far, the projects are dominated by the civil servants; this was also pointed out by civil servants themselves. Immigrant associations were again disappointed at the lack of trust in their knowledge, (in particular those who had an education within the field of social care work in Finland). The project co-ordinators of the municipalities also highlighted the need to focus on time and energy in the contact making with immigrants and their associations. It had taken a long time for the project co-ordinators to create strong contacts with some of the associations but later this had been shown as a good exchange of information. Both the civil servants and the immigrant associations expressed a need to improve the exchange of information and to strengthen the cooperation.

Collaboration between immigrant associations and local authorities

The main form of cooperation consisted of joint projects with a focus on inclusion of immigrants into the labour market and the social and health care system, including education. The institutional actors included the immigrant associations in their activities and official bodies mainly in the form of counselling. The main municipal and national actors working with integrative issues consisted of the Department of Immigration Affairs, Helsinki City Service Department, the Finnish National Board of Education, the Economic and Employment Development Centre, the Multi-Service Office for Immigrants of Vantaa, the Multicultural Advisory Board of Espoo, the

Multicultural Advisory Board of Vantaa, the Advisory Councils for Foreigners in Helsinki and local service centres of the three municipalities

Several of the projects were financed by the municipalities, but in several cases also by the European Social Fund. There were only a few projects which concretely included immigrant associations. For example, in Espoo there were two projects, the TAAKULO and SAAXIB projects focussing on improving the awareness of immigrant associations. These were financed by the Association for Refugee Help. In Vantaa, a project focussing on the inclusion of Ingrian return migrants included some immigrant associations. In Helsinki no specific project was mentioned which would have focussed entirely on immigrant associations. Instead, some of the multicultural projects provided indirect support to immigrant associations. For example, within the frame of the Helsinki 'Neighbourhood project' so called 'neighbourhood centres' were established, which also provided meeting places for immigrants and their associations. Additional contacts for immigrant associations are the Helsinki Department of Social Services and its departments working with immigration issues. They provided both consultation and help with the filling in of subsidy applications. Other helpful official bodies were the board of social and cultural affairs, which provided financing for immigrant associations integrative activities, such as swimming and Finnish courses, i.e. activities which are societal in their nature.

The three municipalities also have social service centres, which provide both information and premises for immigrants and their associations. In the interviews, members of associations pointed out that they had not been aware of these kinds of opportunities. The social workers also had a lack of information about the associations, which were located in the local area. One problem also has to do with immigrants lack of knowledge 'how to' and 'where to inform'.

Representation of immigrant associations in local and national advisory boards

The data showed that members of immigrant associations do participate in the working groups of the advisory boards for multicultural affairs in the municipalities of Espoo and Vantaa. The members were not involved in the

decision making, but did contribute to the planning of integrative issues. In 2004, the Advisory Council for Foreigners in Helsinki was planning to involve members of immigrant associations and representatives of immigrant groups. Finally, the board decided to exclude the idea of involving members from immigrant associations due to their big number. The authorities participating in the councils pointed out the problems in reaching all immigrant associations in their communities due to old or missing contact information.

At the national level the study focussed mainly on the Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (second period). The reason for focussing on the second period was its timing (2001-2004), which was in line with the time period of the other research topics. The aim was to explore to what extent immigrant associations got access to ETNO and were present in the planning of integrative issues. Additionally, a more general aim was to explore the structure and function of the advisory board.

The main role of the advisory board is to make statements on ethnic relations and immigration issues to ministries and other civil servants. ETNO can be defined as a national multi-level consultative expert organ, which gives statements on issues relating to refugee and immigration policy as well as on racism and ethnic relations.

During the second period the focus of ETNO was on the follow-up of the integration programme, in particular on the distribution of information for local authorities working with immigrants. The results for the first objective was poor due to the fact that ETNO had not elected any members based on their membership in associations but on their belongingness in one of the biggest language groups spoken by the foreign population in Finland. The data showed that there were no clear rules for the election of members and for their representation. By the end of the second period of ETNO members of the board started to discuss a more constructive way for the election of members. The Division for Multicultural Affairs suggested an election from immigrant associations (ETNO, 06.11.2004). Since the third period of ETNO, representatives of immigrant associations and ethnic minority groups have been chosen from proposed candidates. The reconstructed ETNO included also representatives from political parties.

8.2 Theoretical Outcomes

This study has been guided by two theoretical approaches. The ethnic resource mobilisation is a combination of discussions of ethnic groups (see e.g. Rex 1994, Rex and Drury 1994) and of resource mobilisation theories (see e.g. Cohen and Arato 1992). This approach was useful in the study of the Research Question 1 and 2a. The answer of research question 2b remained vague due to lack of time. A longer time period would have permitted a profound analysis of immigrant associations' role in their maintenance of the identity of their ethnic group members. The aim with the institutional channelling approach was to study how institutional elements, such as legislation, directives and division of tasks of civil servants, guided the relations between institutional actors and the immigrant associations. This approach was useful mainly in the exploration of research questions 3, 4 and particularly of 5. It has been elaborated by Patrick Ireland (1994) and by the author.

Self-organisation guiding associational life and the ethnic identity

The empirical findings of this study proved that both ethnic resource theory approach and the institutional channelling approach are useful to a certain extent in explaining the role of immigrant associations in the integration of immigrants into Finnish society. The level of self-organisation of the immigrant associations and their descriptive representation appear as core features in the analysis of how the societal integration of ethnic group members takes place and in the analysis of possible collective action.

Collective action can be described as member' collective interest which is expressed in the immigrant associations' activities, e.g. as social services, traditional parties or in the form of a development project directed towards their home land.

The analysis of the data proved that for immigrant associations to realise the above mentioned interest they are guided on the one hand by the self-organisation of an immigrant association and by its descriptive representation i.e. the members' presence in official bodies and projects. On the other, the goals of immigrant associations are also influenced by civil servants' integrative

initiatives and their integrative agenda, e.g. working tasks and criteria outlined by the integration law.

Outcomes of mobilisation efforts

Research Question 2 tried to answer to what extent immigrant (women's) associations (a) mobilise their ethnic group members to be incorporated into Finnish society, and (b) to what extent do these associations strengthen the ethnic identity of their ethnic group members. These questions were studied with help from features of ethnic resource mobilisation, such as an immigrant associations use of their interest, self-organisation (the ability to organise and re-allocate resources) and of their dependency on external and internal resources, such as subsidies and premises received from institutional actors. The second part of the question was difficult to answer. In the future, studies focussing on the internal life of an immigrant association could be useful to better understanding its connection with its members' ethnic identity.

The associational life of eleven mono- and multi- ethnic associations was explored. The outcome showed that associations focussing on societal activities, such as social services where dependent on Finnish subsidy givers, such as Finland's Slot Machine Association and on the European Social Fund. The latter was mainly mentioned as a subsidy provider for projects. More than half of the thirty-two studied immigrant associations (of the total data) have either integrative or purely societal interests. During the interviews, members pointed out immigrants' need to get help with social and health care issues amongst other things. Another explanation was the subsidy providers' interest to support societal activities, which could also be seen in the nature of projects financed and organised by the municipalities and the European Union. Additionally, there is a risk that an association whose activities are not met by the interest of institutional actors become separated from Finnish society. The data did not prove any associations whose mobilisations would lead towards separation. Transnational immigrant associations can become separated from Finnish society if these do not have any activity forms focussing on Finnish society.

The majority of the immigrant associations had integrative goals. The goal of these associations can be described as an 'integrative twinning' referring to the

strengthening of ethnic identity and to inclusion of immigrants into the socio-economic domain of Finnish society (as their goals some associations had both integrative twinning and the aim to make their ethnic culture familiar to the Finns). Several associations mentioned their goal as integration of immigrants into Finnish society but in practice this was in conflict with their activities. The integrative activities were mainly social services which focussed on the Finnish socio-economic domain. The ethno-cultural activities consisted of social get-togethers between the members of the associations and their ethnic group, traditional dances and festivals. The problem with the mixture between integrative twinning and societal integration is that the former was done mainly without any top-down subsidy support, whereas the latter was subsidized. As a result this can lead to crowding out of ethno-cultural activities. The majority of the immigrant associations had an *integrative* outcome of mobilisation. Still, it is difficult to say to what extent the associations manage to mobilise their members towards *integrative twinning* due to the number of societal and ethno-cultural activities organised by these associations. The data found little evidence for clear marginalisation of immigrant associations from Finnish society and for segregation. (The latter refers to the exclusion of immigrant associations from their ethnic group).

Cooperation expressed as a form of partial inclusion

Immigrant associations' ability to participate and to use existing representative opportunities was explored by the levels of participation influenced by the immigrant associations' self-organisation and representative description. The level of participation was described as high if the immigrant associations had good organisational skills, management opportunities and members who were present in decision making bodies. Additionally, the level of immigrant associations' participation was also guided by the governmental and municipal reactive and interactive participation. Four kinds of participative outcomes were distinguished from the data. These were: the sharing of information, consultative participation, partnership (or co-agenda setting) and participative decision making.

The most reactive form is based on top-down *information* sharing from local authorities to immigrants and their associations. In practice several of

the local authorities also provide consultation as previously described. The *consultative partnership* was the most common form of interaction between immigrant associations and local authorities. More or less half of the thirty-two associations receive information and help from local authorities in the form of consultation. Consultation is a fairly reactive form of participation and includes only a little active participation from the immigrant associations. Another fairly common form of participation was *partnership (or co-agenda setting)*, which took place in integrative projects co-ordinated by local authorities, Finnish voluntary associations and by the Rehabilitation Foundation, amongst others. The projects organised by local authorities had some projects done *for* the needs of immigrant associations, but no projects *together* with them. This was also criticised by the immigrants. Participative decision making took place only in projects organised by Finnish voluntary associates. I did not find any projects or other initiatives where immigrant associations would have been taken as equal partners in the decision making process.

Since the mid 1990s local authorities have organised integrative projects based on the partial participation of immigrant associations. The reason for partial instead of full participation can be explained by the hegemonic welfare ideology in Finland. The focus of several of the integrative projects is the inclusion of immigrants into the social and economic domain. The inclusive mechanisms, which are described by Finnish civil servants, do not strengthen the idea of two-way integration outlined in the integration act (L 493/1999). Instead, the hegemonic idea of the inclusion of immigrants to a universal welfare society is strengthened by civil servants' 'laissez-faire' support of immigrants' ethno-cultural practices.

Descriptive-representation guiding immigrant associations

In Research Question 5 and in particular Research Question 6 the analysis was on immigrant associations' access and presence in planning and decision making of integrative issues. I explored the associations' descriptive representation with their participation and representation in Finnish society (7.5.2). The focus was on the immigrant associations own abilities and awareness of presence in decision making bodies. I made a distinction between

four forms of descriptive representation guided by associational ideology (interests), legitimacy (registration) and by presence (participation).

The weakest form of descriptive representation was the members' *lack of awareness of why they should be present* in participative bodies and activities, such advisory bodies, seminars and joint projects. This lack of awareness was common mainly among unregistered or newly registered associations who had weak organisational skills. This had been fairly common among the immigrant women's associations at the beginning of their associational life. The second form was described as a *lack of presence*. It was common that immigrant associations were aware of the importance of participating but had not yet found the right contacts and access to do it. *Partial presence* again consists of immigrant associations, which have clear ideological goals, legitimacy and contacts, such as the Kanava association (see sub chapter 6.1.2) or the Sadko Club (see sub chapter 6.1.4), and where both had created contacts with bigger mono-ethnic associations who guided them. The contacts with other immigrant associations had helped these associations to create contacts with Finnish local authorities and to participate in projects. The fourth description can be called as *partial partnership* where registered immigrant associations which also had a clearly defined interest participated in projects organised by municipalities. The problem was that these associations were included by local authorities in projects, which seldom were, according to the members, done *with* them. In other words, the focus remained fairly top-down guided. The immigrants complained at being perceived as passive actors by the local authorities. Immigrant associations gained access to decision making mainly in cooperation and networks with other immigrant associations. One reason for the lack of inclusion of immigrant associations and the lack of more mutual partnership is the vague sharing of information between the two partners.

Both lack presence and partial presence, which describe the participation of immigrant associations in decision making bodies; in this case projects with local authorities and their representation in local advisory boards.

8.3 Reflections

Both societal and ethno-cultural activities should be supported by subsidy providers. The former is important in particular, for newly arrived immigrants and to those who do not speak Finnish. Immigrant associations can provide important information about the Finnish social and health care system and labour market to the immigrants. Additionally, immigrant associations play an important role for immigrant women who have faced physical or mental violence. For women who come from a collective culture with strong family contacts it can be difficult to leave the home and to discuss their needs with Finnish social workers. Particular immigrant women's associations help the women get information about their rights, health care and sometimes a place to shelter.

As the results showed there is also a risk of over emphasis on societal activities. The strengthening of societal practices and the ignorance of ethno-cultural practices makes the recognition of particularities difficult. The institutional political communication between members of majority and minority groups cannot be improved if the latter are not included in communicative spaces, such advisory boards and projects. The inclusion of minority members, such as representatives of immigrant associations is only a half way solution. A change towards more effective participation and inclusion can take place only when both partners have an equal say in planning (e.g. advisory boards) and decision making venues (e.g. in the realisation of joint projects).

Another problem with the social services will arise if these services are moved from the official sphere to the third sector. This could lead to conflict with constitutional law, which states rights for all citizens to health care and social services. In addition, there is no guarantee that volunteer members can be in charge of this task due to a possible lack of expertise, resources and time. An option for the role of immigrant associations as service providers could be closer cooperation between local authorities and immigrant associations. These associations could provide their help as experts in the language and traditions of their ethnic group for the local authorities. Additionally, immigrant associations could still work as counsellors and information providers for immigrants into Finnish society. Immigrant groups are very heterogeneous

and therefore the needs of immigrants can be larger in ethnic groups, which greatly differ in their culture and language from Finnish culture.

The importance of subsidizing ethno-cultural activities of immigrant associations has to do with the maintenance of the immigrants' ethnic identity. People are not necessarily aware of their ethnic identity before the move to another country. It is the majority population which reminds the immigrant of his ethnicity by making the distinction of 'we' (the majority population) and 'they' (the immigrants). In particular, the children of the immigrants are in a difficult position between Finnish culture and the culture of his parents. Immigrant associations can help immigrants to strengthen or re-create their identity by showing them how valuable their ethnic roots are. To live in two cultures is not a problem but instead to live between two cultures can be.

Still, equal inclusion of immigrants to the members' own ethnic culture and to Finnish society can take place only if the associations can provide their ethnic group with both societal and ethno-cultural activities. Naturally, it is preferable that immigrant associations and their communities work as bridge builders between their ethnic groups and the receiving society. Associations, which only focus on ethnic culture and traditions, can alienate its members from Finnish society leading in the worst case scenario to conflict.

8.4 Summary

This chapter has discussed the main findings of this study and also the existing problems in immigrant associations' opportunities to participate and represent their members' interests in Finnish society. The organisational scenery of immigrants is becoming more visible both at local level in the municipalities as well as at the regional level in the National Advisory Board of Ethnic Relations. In comparison to immigrant associations in other western European countries, claims making is still a fairly uncommon phenomenon among the immigrant associations in Finland. This can partly be explained by the lack of political interests towards Finnish society and by the fairly liberal policy exercised by policy makers towards immigrant associations. This does not mean that immigrant groups and their associations get their interests and needs heard as well as members of the majority population. Immigrant

associations have taken the first step towards organised mobilisation among some immigrant groups by identifying their needs and interests. As the data showed, immigrants are not only interested in becoming part of the Finnish societal system, getting access to labour market and to the Finnish education system, but they are also interested in strengthening their ethnic identity. In particular, youth are looking for their place between two cultures. In future, the role of immigrant associations as mediators between the Finnish system and immigrant groups may increase if their skills as experts of their own culture are taken seriously into consideration by the policy makers.

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Appendix 1

MFA	MI	ML	MED	MSAH	MJ	MEN
Ministry for Foreign Affairs	Ministry of the Interior	Ministry of Labour	Ministry of Education	Ministry of Social Affairs and Health	Ministry of Justice	Min. of the Environment
Coordination of international cooperation, international agreements, visa policy	Immigration affairs * Entry into the country and departure from the country, aliens' residence and their supervision * Issues on nationality * Coordination. of the EU issue	*Reception of asylum seekers *Measures promoting immigrants' integration into society *Coordination: ethnic relations, prevention of racism and discrimination	Educational and cultural services for immigrants	Guidance in matters regarding health care and social welfare	*Issues on legal protection and discrimination * Appeals and Courts of Appeal:	Housing matters
Embassies and consulates abroad; Visa affairs	Directorate of Immigration (UVI)	Employment and Economic Development Centres (15) Employment Departments	National Board of Education		Appeals against decisions based on the Aliens' Act and the Act on Citizenship:	
	<i>Frontier Guard Service</i>	<i>Reception centres 15</i>			Administrative Courts The Supreme Administrative Court	
	Controls of entry conditions, turning back aliens at the frontier	Ombudsman for Minorities: *Securing the position and rights of ethnic minorities and foreigners				
	<i>Police</i>	Discrimination Board *Supervising the prohibition of ethnic discrimination				

Source: Ministry of Labour, 2005

Figure 1. Administration of migration affairs in Finland until the end of 2007

Appendix 2

Research question 1: Charting of Immigrant Associations¹⁰⁸

TELEPHONE QUESTIONNAIRE

Core topics:

1. Contact information
2. Background information (e.g. Chair, board, number of members etc.)
3. Financing
4. Premises / Meeting place
5. Informal activities
6. Formal activities
7. Counselling
8. Networks
9. Exchange of information
10. Other

¹⁰⁸ Translated from Finnish

Appendix 3

Research question 2: Immigrant women's' associations¹⁰⁹

Half-structured interview

Part I Background information of the interviewees'

Name, contacts, time of residence in Finland, occupation (student, intern, employee, unemployed), marital status and possible children.

Part II Participation in activities organised by immigrant associations in Finland

Questions:

- Why are you a member of "X" association?
- Are you a member of any other association? If so, which one?
- Can you tell me why your association was established?
- And what are the goals of the association?
- Have the goals changed during the history of the association?
- What kind of activity forms do you have?
- How do you finance your activities?
- With whom do your association co-operate? (For example, other associations, actors of the third sector and the authorities)
- Do you have international contacts?
- What about contacts to the native country?
- What kind of contacts?
- How do you strive to make the immigrant women's' situation better?
- Do you participate in the board?
- In ETNO? In the Advisory Board for Foreigners?

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- Any conflicts?
- How have you resolved them?
- What kind of plans do you have for the future?
- How does your programme for this autumn look?

Part III Life in native country

Questions about themes concerning: family, marital status, children, education, career, hobbies, interests in civic activity, gender equality, the status of women, interest in politics in the native country before and after migration.

Part IV The migration to Finland

Questions about themes concerning: Reasons for migration, the migration to Finland, image of Finland before the migration experiences of migration, problems, e.g. racism, xenophobia, pleasant experiences, first contacts in Finland, friends in Finland

Other questions, such as:

- To you, what does integration stand for?
- Where do you feel like home?
- Are you planning to stay in Finland?

Appendix 4

Research question 3: cooperation between immigrant association and local authorities¹¹⁰

Answerer:	
Workplace:	
Phone number:	
E-mail:	

1. Can you name the most important cooperation forms with immigrant associations?
2. Can you give a short description of the development of the cooperation (when did it start, who did the objective, how has it developed)?
3. Can you mention the most important cooperation forms now and before with immigrants and their associations?
4. What kind of help/harm has the integration law brought to your work?
5. Have you got financial help for immigrant association projects?
6. Do the immigrants participate in your meetings and decision making?
7. Can you name the most important goals for your advisory board and the forms of how to achieve them?
8. How do you fulfil the goals of your advisory board?
9. What kind of conflicts have you faced between immigrant associations and your working place?
10. How have you solved them?
11. What kinds of immigrant associations create new ideas, services and other forms of activity?
12. Are the associations active enough to represent these kinds of new ideas?

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13. What are the best ways for the associations to get these new ideas forward?
14. How could the visibility of immigrant associations be improved in different sectors of society?
15. In which other ways are you in contact with immigrants other than with immigrant associations?
16. Do you get enough information about the immigrant associations?
17. What are your most important ways to get information?
18. How could the counselling be improved?
19. What are the prerequisites for a “good” immigrant association?
20. What do you think about political and religious immigrant associations?
21. In what ways should the cooperation with immigrant association be developed?
22. Do you co-operate with immigrant women’s associations, if so, what kind?
23. How could the immigrant women’s situation be improved?
24. What kind of benefits have/could the cooperation with immigrant associations brought/bring?
25. To you, what does integration stand for?

Appendix 5

Questions for immigrant associations working with local authorities¹¹¹

(Interview guide)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE IMMIGRANT ASSOCIATION

1. Can you tell something about the background of your association?

- 1.1 Motives
- 1.2 Goals (in the beginning, later on) Establishment/
- 1.3 Structure, (Registration)
- 1.4 Activity forms
- 1.5 Premises

COOPERATION

2. How do you co-operate with the local authorities?

- 2.1 Participation in projects
- 2.2 Project partners
- 2.3 Co-ordination of projects
- 2.4 Financing of projects
- 2.5 Influence of the integration law
- 2.6 Issues that local authorities should improve

REPRESENTATION

3. Is your association represented in:

- 3.1 A local Advisory Board for Multicultural Affairs?
- 3.2 The National Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations – ETNO?

4. How do you / a member of your association

- 4.1 Participate in the advisory board(s)?
- 4.2 Represent your ethnic groups' interest and needs?

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OTHER CONTACTS

5. Do you have contacts to other immigrant associations?

6. Do you have international contacts?

- 6.1 Networks
- 6.2 International associations, voluntary
- 6.3 Voluntary associations in the home land
- 6.4 Governmental, municipal actors in the home land

OTHER COLLABORATION

7. Do you collaborate with

- 7.1 Other immigrant associations?
- 7.2 Finnish voluntary associations?
- 7.3 Voluntary associations in your home land?

INFORMATION

8. From where do you get information about the authorities/ other associations?

- 8.1 Do you get enough information?
- 8.2 How do you inform about your activities?
- 8.3 How would you like to inform better about your activities?

INTEREST AND NEEDS

9. What kind of needs do immigrants have?

- 9.1 Immigrant women?
- 9.2 Your members?

INTEGRATION

10. To you, what does integration stand for??

Appendix 6

Research Question 4: ETNO¹¹²

Interview guide

BACKGROUND

1. What was your role in ETNO?
2. How did you become a member of ETNO?
3. How long were you a member of ETNO?
4. How long were you member of the 'Family division'?

5. GOALS

6. What were the goals of ETNO / the 'Family division'?
7. Did the goals change during the last few years?

8. STRUCTURE

9. How where the members chosen to ETNO? To the 'Family division'?
10. How did you stay in contact with the members of ETNO / the Family division?
11. Who were the members of the Family division?
12. How where the members chosen to the 'Family division'?
13. How did you communicate with each other?
14. Did you have members from immigrant women's associations the Family division?
15. If so, from which one?
16. Do you think that the members actively took part in the working groups? Why? Why not?

17. FUNCTION

18. What kind of activities did you have?

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19. To whom were these activities directed?
20. How have the practices of 'Family division' changed during the last few years?
21. What kind of obstacles were there?
22. Can you mention some of the main goals you have achieved?
23. Can you mention some of the main obstacles that the 'Family division' has faced during the last few years?

24. FUTURE
25. What kinds of future plans are there for ETNO?
26. To what extent should the Family division work as a mediator in solving family problems?
27. What would you like to change in ETNO (structure, function, goals)?
28. What kind of role do you think that the immigrant associations could play in the improvement of ETNO?

Appendix 7

List of interviewed immigrant associations

‘The organisational landscape of immigrant associations’, (2002-2003)

1. AFROCAREWO ry.
2. Anatolian Kulttuurikeskus ry. AKK
3. Arabilais-suomalaisten perheiden yhdistys ry.
4. Ékgirtin ry
5. FC Somali
6. Helsinki International Sports Club ry. (HISC)
7. Ibn-Fadlan arabikulttuuri yhdistys ry.
8. Ibo residents (was unregistered during the data collection)
9. Immigrant Labour Association ILA ry
10. Inkeri keskus
11. Irakin Naisten yhdistys ry
12. Iranilaisten Pakolaisten Federaatio ry
13. Iranin ja Irakin Työllistämisyhdistys ry
14. Kanava nuoriso ry
15. Kurdistan komitea ry
16. Kurdistanin Rauhan Puolustajat ry
17. Multicultural Tennis Association M.T.A ry
18. National Association of Sierra Leone (was unregistered during the data collection)
19. SADKO-klubi ry.
20. Somali Social Democrats ry
21. Somaliliitto ry (Somali League) ry.
22. Spektri Multicultural ry.
23. Union Latina ry VKDL -
24. Venäläinen kulttuuri-demokraattinen liitto), (registered 1945)

1. AFROCAREWO
2. Golis
3. Irakin Naisten yhdistys ry
4. Monika Naiset ry
5. Ziwar

The cooperation forms between local authorities and immigrant associations in the Helsinki metropolitan area, (2003-2004)

1. Irakin Naisten yhdistys ry
2. Hakunilan Kansainvälinen yhdistys
3. Inkerikeskus
4. Monika Naiset ry.
5. USHA ry
6. Vantaan Monikulttuuriyhdistys Portti

+ A member from the former support organisation for immigrant associations called 'Maahanmuuttajientuki ry'.

Appendix 8

Table 1 Summary of eleven immigrant associations (continues on next page)

Association / Year of establishment (i)	Type of ethnicity	Typology	Language	Focus group	Goals	Number of members	Main activities	Main subsidy provider(s)	Informal contacts	Formal contacts
6.1.1 The Ingrian association, 1995	Mono	I	Ingrian, (Russian)	All (ii)	Inclusion of Ingrians to Finnish socio-economic domain, strengthening of ethnic identity	450	Societal services, e.g. counselling and courses	RAY(vii), Ministry of Education, Social/cultural boards of the cities	Other immigrant associations	Social Dep. of Helsinki, Unit of Migration Affairs
6.1.2 The Sadko Club, 1999	Mono	E (i)	Russian	Children, Youth	Creation of social cohesion among Russian speaking children and youth, fight against marginalisation	140-200 (iii)	Social and cultural activities	RAY, Ministry of Education, Social/cultural boards	Other immi. asso., Finnish voluntary associations	No
6.1.3 The Somali League of Finland, 1996	Mono	I	Somali	All (iv)	Dual integration: inclusion of Somalis to Finnish society and making the Somali culture familiar for the Finns.	1500 (iii)	Societal services, focus on sharing of information, also cultural activities for children	Ministry of Education	Other immi. asso., Finnish vol. asso.	Social Dep. of Helsinki, Ministries,7
6.1.4 The Kanava Youth association, 1998	Mono	I	Somali	Youth	Inclusion of Somali youth and children to Finnish society and Somali culture, fight against marginalisation	300	Educative, sport and cultural activities, counselling and conciliation	RAY	Other immi. asso., Finnish vol. asso.	Social Dep. of Helsinki, Unit of Migration Affairs
6.2.1The Arabic-Finnish association, 1999	Multi	I	Non-specific (v)	All	To strengthen the relations between Arabic-Finnish families; to maintain Arabic traditions and language	160	Arabic and Finnish celebrations, seminars with focus either on the Arabic or Finnish society	Membership fees	No	No

Association / Year of establishment	Type of ethnicity	Typology	Language	Focus group	Goals	Number of members	Main activities	Main subsidy provider(s)	Informal contacts	Formal contacts
6.2.2 The Hakunila International association, 1998	Multi	I	Arabic, Finnish	All	To create cultural interaction among immigrants from different cultures	8-10(6)	Cultural events organised by member associations; projects against discrimination and racism	RAY, Ministry of Education	Other immi. asso., Finnish vol. asso.	Social Dep. of Vantaa, Other
6.3.1 The Golis association, 1998	Mono	T, (S)	Somali	Women	To help orphanages in Somalia; provide societal inclusion of Somali women in Finland	45-50	A transnational development project, Koran school, sport activities	European Union	Other immi. asso., Finnish vol. asso.	Social Dep. of Vantaa
6.3.2 The Zhiwar Women's network, 2000	Mono	T, (S)	Kurdish	Women	Societal inclusion of Kurdish women in Finnish society, empowerment of Kurdish women in Iraq	57	Counseling, help for victims of violence, handicraft courses for Kurdish women in Iraq	Min. of Education, Foreign Min., Social/cultural boards	Other immi. asso., Finnish vol. asso.	Home land, Other
6.3.3 The Iraqi Women association, 1996	Multi	S,(E)	Kurdish, Arabic	Women	Societal inclusion of Kurdish women in Finnish society	75	Counseling of social and health care issues, providing help for victims of violence	Ministry of Education, Social/ cultural boards	Other immi. asso., Finnish vol. asso.	Other
6.3.4 The Monika Naiset League, 1998	Multi	S	Non-specific	Women	Prevention of violence; strengthening social togetherness of immigrant women	13, (vi)	Societal services, counselling, seminars, 'hot-line', shelter	Ministry of justice, European Union	Other immi. asso., Finnish vol. asso.	Social Dep. of Helsinki, Ministries, Other
6.3.5 The Africawo association, 2000	Multi	S (T)	Non-specific	Women	Social and economic inclusion of African women to Finnish society		Information, help for victims of violence	Ministry of justice, Foreign Ministry	Other immi. asso., Finnish vol. asso.	Home land, Other

(i) The associations were registered either on the same year or within two years time, (ii) All refers to all age groups and both women and men, (iii) The latter number refers to number of members in the beginning of 2008, (iv) According to the coordinator the number includes all who speak Somali as their native language, (v) Several languages spoken, (vi) member associations, (vii) RAY = Finland's Slot Machine Association.

Categories of typology: I = Integrative, S= Societal, E= Ethno-cultural, T = Transnational

Sammanfattning

Sedan slutet av 1980-talet har invandringen i Finland dominerat över utvandringen. Som en konsekvens av detta, har de främsta besluten och åtgärderna för att hantera en allt växande invandring skett mellan nittiotalets hälft till början av årtusendet. Denna tidsperiod är också intressant för den som vill undersöka invandrarföreningarnas organisering i huvudstadsregionen (Helsingfors, Esbo och Vanda). Avhandlingen granskar föreningarnas roll för invandrarnas samhälleliga och politiska integration i det finländska samhället. Syftet belyses genom att studera invandrarföreningarnas möjligheter att delta i beslutfattandet när det gäller integrationsärenden och att representera sina etniska gruppmedlemmars intressen på det lokala och nationella planet. Därtill analyseras föreningarnas förmåga att mobilisera invandrarna till att delta i det finländska samhället.

Arbetet är uppdelat i sex undersökningshelheter. Undersökningen börjar med en allmän redogörelse över invandrarföreningarnas struktur och funktion i Finland. Avhandlingen fortsätter sedan med att presentera fem mindre undersökningshelheter. I den andra och tredje undersökningshelheten sätts fokus på föreningarnas strävan att a) mobilisera sina etniska gruppmedlemmar att bli en del av det finländska samhället och b) strävan att förstärka och bevara invandrarnas etniska identitet. De tre övriga undersökningshelheterna handlar om invandrarföreningarnas möjligheter att delta och representera sina intressen på det lokala och nationella planet. I den tredje undersökningshelheten analyseras myndigheternas integrationsagenda, medan den fjärde reflekterar över myndigheternas uppfattningar om invandrarföreningarnas betydelse för integrationen. Avhandlingens femte del fokuserar på invandrarföreningarnas samarbete med lokala myndigheter. Den sista delen analyserar invandrarföreningarnas representation i lokala myndigheters samarbetsorgan, liksom i kommunala och nationella mångkulturella nämnder. I avhandlingen framhävs bland annat invandrarkvinnornas föreningsverksamhet. Sedan slutet av nittiotalet har invandrarkvinnor börjat organisera sig till föreningar och nätverk.

Den teoretiska insatsen består av teori om 'ethnic resource mobilisation' och teori om sk. 'institutional channelling'. Den förstnämnda är en kombination av etnicitets- och mobiliserings- teorier, medan den sistnämnda består av diskussioner om institutionella strukturer som är relaterade till myndigheternas integrationsagenda. 'Ethnic resource mobilisation' har varit nyttig vid analysen av invandrarföreningarnas organisatoriska svagheter och styrka. Fokus har riktats på medlemmarnas förmåga att representera och beskriva föreningarnas syfte (sk. 'deskriptiv representation') och på medlemmarnas organisatoriska färdigheter ('själv-organisation'). 'Institutional channelling' har fokuserat på myndigheternas strävan och intressen att ta hänsyn invandrarföreningar vid planering och beslutfattande av integrationspolitiska ärenden.

Trettio två invandrarföreningar indelades i fyra kategorier efter verksamhet och syfte. Syftet fastställdes genom medlemmarnas beskrivningar. Den integrativa kategorin består av föreningar som strävar att främja sina etniska gruppmedlemmars deltagande i det finländska samhället och att bevara den etniska identiteten. De flesta föreningarna är integrativa (15 föreningar av 32). Samhälleliga föreningar fokuserar på att integrera invandrarna till arbetsmarknaden och till det finländska utbildningssystemet, medan de etnokulturella föreningarnas syfte är att förstärka gruppmedlemmarnas identitet. De transnationella föreningarna strävar framför allt efter att förbättra barnens och kvinnornas levnadsförhållanden i medlemmarnas gamla hemländer.

Undersökningens kvalitativa material samlades in mellan februari 2002 och november 2005. Det empiriska materialet består bl.a. av 71 intervjuer med medlemmar från invandrarföreningar och myndigheter. De flesta intervjuerna var halvstrukturerade av vilka en del även hade några öppna frågor. Vid insamlingen av materialet gjorde jag även deltagande observationer och dokumentär analys. Det sistnämnda bestod av legislativa dokument, planeringsrapporter och uppföljnings- utredningar. Jag samlade även en liten del av kvantitativt material över invandrarföreningar i Finland för undersökningens första del.

Invandrarföreningarnas möjlighet att mobilisera sina etniska gruppmedlemmar beror delvis på föreningarnas förmåga att finansiera sin verksamhet. Finansiering ges främst till samhällelig verksamhet. Det finns

en risk av att den etnokulturella verksamhet dör ut ifall finansiärerna enbart fokuserar på samhällelig verksamhet. Förstärkningen av gruppmedlemmarnas etniska identitet sker främst med hjälp av social och etnokulturell verksamhet. I fokus står bland annat barn och unga som lever mellan två kulturer. En annan viktig verksamhetsform är föreningarnas mentala hjälp i form av ömsesidigt stöd och terapikurser. Utöver detta försöker många invandrarkvinnoföreningar hjälpa kvinnor, som har stött på våld, med att erbjuda rådgivning och i vissa fall en plats på ett kvinnohus. Undersökningen visade att det bland invandrarna finns en allt växande behov av stöd till barn, ungdomar och kvinnor när det gäller deras välmående.

Invandrarnas deltagande i myndigheternas integrationsverksamhet sker främst via samarbetsprojekt. Ända till slutet av nittioalet var samarbetet mellan invandrarföreningar och myndigheter mycket begränsat. Sedan sekelskiftet har samarbetet ökat. Enligt föreningsmedlemmarna var problemet med samarbetet att projekten allt för långt var styrda av myndigheterna medan föreningsmedlemmarna oftast reducerades till passiva aktörer. Både myndigheterna och invandrarföreningarna uttryckte ett behov av att förbättra samarbetet och förbättra kommunikationen mellan de olika parterna.

Invandrarföreningarnas representation i mångkulturella nämnder har varit ganska svag. I de mångkulturella nämnderna i städerna Esbo och Vanda var invandrarföreningar inkluderade, men enbart till planeringsarbetet. Helsingfors stad inte har inkluderat föreningar i sin utlänningsnämnd, p.g.a. problemet att hitta ett demokratiskt sätt att inkludera alla stadens invandrarföreningar. Under ETNOs – den Nationella Delegationen för Etniska Relationer – andra verksamhetsperiod var inga invandrarföreningar representerade bland ETNOs medlemmar. I stället baserade sig medlemskapet på de största språkgrupperna bland utlänningar i Finland. Sedan ETNOs tredje period (2005 – 2007) har även representanter för invandrarföreningar inkluderats i delegationen.

Tiivistelmä

Kahdeksankymmenen luvun loppupuolella Suomen siirtolaisuus muuttui maahanmuuttovoittoiseksi. Yhdeksänkymmenluvun puolivälistä aina vuosituhannen vaihteeseen alkoi keskeisimpien kotouttavien toimenpiteiden toteutus. Kyseinen ajankohta muodostui mielenkiintoiseksi vaiheeksi tutkia maahanmuuttajayhdistysten järjestäytymistä pääkaupunkiseudun alueella (Helsinki, Espoo ja Vantaa). Tutkimus tarkastelee näiden yhdistysten merkitystä maahanmuuttajien yhteiskunnallisessa ja poliittisessa kotoutumisessa suomalaiseen yhteiskuntaan. Edellä mainittua tutkimusaihetta lähestytään yhdistysten osallistumis-, päätöksenteko- ja vaikutusmahdollisuuksien kautta paikallisella ja valtakunnallisella tasolla. Tämän lisäksi tutkimuksessa pohditaan yhdistysten valmiuksia mobilisoida maahanmuuttajat osaksi suomalaista kansalaisyhteiskuntaa.

Väitöskirja koostuu kuudesta tutkimusosa-alueesta. Ensimmäisessä ja laajimmassa osassa tarkastellaan yksi- ja monietnistien yhdistysten yleisiä rakenteita ja toimintamuotoja Suomessa. Toisessa osassa pohditaan yhdistysten pyrkimyksiä a) mobilisoida etnisen ryhmänsä jäsenet osaksi suomalaista yhteiskuntaa ja b) ylläpitää näiden identiteettiä. Tässä osassa huomio kohdistuu etenkin maahanmuuttajanaisten yhdistystoimintaan, joiden kiinnostus kansalaistoimintaan on kasvanut vuosituhannen vaihteessa. Kolmas osa käsittelee viranomaisten kotouttavia toimenpiteitä ja ohjelmia. Tutkimuksen neljäs osa-alue pohtii viranomaisten kokemuksia ja näkemyksiä maahanmuuttajayhdistysten toiminnasta. Viidennessä osassa perehdytään maahanmuuttajayhdistysten ja paikallisten viranomaisten yhteistyömuotoihin. Viimeinen osa keskittyy maahanmuuttajayhdistysten vaikutusmahdollisuuksiin valtakunnallisella tasolla. Tässä osassa tarkastellaan yhdistysten edustusta ETNOssa – Etnisten suhteiden neuvottelukunnassa.

Tutkimuksen teoreettisessa osuudessa käsitellään etnisyyss- ja mobilisatioteoreettisia suuntauksia ('ethnic resource mobilisation' -teoria) sekä institutionaalisia rakenteita koskevaa teoretisointia ('institutional channelling' -teoria), joka liittyy kotouttavaan toimintaan Suomessa, kuten viranomaisten

kotouttava työ. 'Ethnic resource mobilisation' -teoria oli hyödyllinen etenkin analysoitaessa yhdistysten vahvuuksia ja heikkouksia, kuten jäsenten tietoisuutta ja taitoa kuvata yhdistyksen toimintaa/tehtävää ('representation'), kykyä mobilisoida muita maahanmuuttajia sekä heidän valmiuttaan yhdistystoiminnan hallintoon ('self-organisation').

Suoritin laadullisen aineiston keruun helmikuun 2002 ja marraskuun 2005 välisenä aikana. Tutkimusaineisto koostui 71 haastattelusta yhdistysjäsenten ja viranomaisten kanssa. Nämä haastattelut olivat lähinnä puolistrukturoituja, sisältäen joitakin avoimia täydentäviä kysymyksiä. Aineistokeruun aikana tein myös osallistuvaa havainnointia ja analysoin asiakirjoja, kuten juridisia dokumentteja, suunnittelutyön selontekoja ja seurantaraportteja. Ensimmäistä tutkimusosa-aluetta varten varten keräsin myös jonkin verran määrällistä aineistoa maahanmuuttajayhdistyksistä Suomessa.

Analysoidessani kolmekymmentäkahta maahanmuuttajayhdistystä luokittelin ne toimintamuotojen sekä jäsenten ilmoittamien tavoitteiden mukaan neljään yhdistystyyppiin: integroivat, yhteiskunnalliset, etnokulttuuriset ja transnationaaliset yhdistykset.

Suurin osa maahanmuuttajayhdistyksistä kuuluu ns. integroivaan luokkaan (15/32). Nämä pyrkivät edistämään jäsentensä pääsyä suomalaiseen yhteiskuntaan ja yrittävät vahvistaa maahanmuuttajien etnistä identiteettiä järjestämällä kyseiselle etniselle ryhmälle suunnattua toimintaa, kuten perinteiden ylläpitoon liittyviä taidekursseja, uutisten vaihtoa kotimaan kanssa sekä perinnefestivaaleja. Yhteiskunnallisten yhdistysten ensisijainen pyrkimys on auttaa maahanmuuttajia pääsemään osaksi työmarkkinoita ja suomalaista koulutusjärjestelmää. Etnokulttuuriset yhdistykset keskittyvät puolestaan vain etnisyyden ylläpitoon sekä oman identiteetin säilyttämiseen. Transnationaaliset yhdistykset pyrkivät toimimaan siltana entisen kotimaan ja maahanmuuttajien välillä, mikä onkin tärkeä toimintamuoto monelle diasporassa elävälle kurdille ja somalille. Nämä yhdistykset pyrkivät parantamaan mm. lasten ja naisten elinoloja myös maahanmuuttajien entisessä kotimaassa. Yhdistysten luokittelu perustuu niiden pääasialliseen toimintaan, joka ei kuitenkaan sulje pois muita toimintamuotoja, eli yhdistystyypeissä ilmeni myös päällekkäisyyttä.

Aineistosta kävi ilmi, että suurin osa ulkopuolisista avustuksista tuli joko Raha-automaattiyhdistyksestä tai opetusministeriöstä. Muita tärkeitä rahoituksen lähteitä olivat kaupunkien sosiaalilautakunnat. Rahoitusta annettiin etenkin yhteiskunnalliseen toimintaan. Uhkana on, että maahanmuuttajayhdistysten etnokulttuurinen toiminta tyrehtyy, mikä on tapahtunut useissa muissa eurooppalaisissa maissa.

Maahanmuuttajayhdistysten mahdollisuus mobilisoida etnisen ryhmänsä jäseniä riippuu niin yhdistysten ulkoisista kuin sisäisistä voimavaroista. Ulkoisia voimavaroja ovat avustukset ja suomalaisten vapaaehtoisyhdistysten antama tuki, kuten neuvonta sekä viranomaisten apu tarvittavien tilojen löytämiseksi. Sisäisiä tekijöitä ovat mm. johtajuus, jäsenyys sekä luottamus ja sitoutuminen. Näitä asioita tarkastelin lähinnä jäsenten taitona ilmaista yhdistyksen funktiota ('descriptive-representation') ja kykyä edustaa yhdistystä. Tämän lisäksi tarkastelin heidän organisaatiotaitojaan. Edellä mainitut tekijät olivat yleensä paremmin edustettuja vanhemmissa yhdistyksissä, joille oli ehtinyt karttua kokemusta ja taitoja ajan myötä. Ne olivat myös ehtineet verkostoitua muiden suomalaisten yhdistysten ja viranomaisten kanssa. Siitä huolimatta, suurin osa haastatelluista yhdistysten edustajista mainitsi paremman yhteistyön tarpeen suomalaisten kumppaneiden kanssa.

Maahanmuuttajayhdistykset pyrkivät vahvistamaan etnisen ryhmänsä jäsenten identiteettiä mm. järjestämällä sosiaalisia ja etnokulttuurista toimintaa erityisesti lapsille ja nuorille, jotka elävät kahden kulttuurin välissä. Tärkeitä toimintamuotoja ovat myös vertaistuki ja terapiakurssit. Useat maahanmuuttajanaisten yhdistykset pyrkivät auttamaan henkistä ja/tai fyysistä väkivaltaa kohdanneita naisia mm. tarjoamalla neuvontaa ja joissakin tapauksissa myös turvakotipaikkoja. Aineistosta ilmeni, että etenkin lapset, nuoret ja naiset tarvitsevat tarvitsevat perusterveydenhuoltoon liittyvää tukea.

Maahanmuuttajayhdistysten ja viranomaisten välinen yhteistyö toteutuu lähinnä projektityön kautta. Se on ollut aina yhdeksänkymmenluvun loppuun saakka vähäistä, mutta on lisääntynyt vuosituhaten vaihteen jälkeen. Jäsenet kokivat ongelmana etenkin projektien hallinnoinnin, joka oli lähinnä viranomaisten käsissä. Tämän vuoksi yhdistysten jäsenet tunsivat joutuvansa passiiviseen asemaan. Sekä viranomaiset että maahanmuuttajat korostivat tässäkin paremman yhteistyön ja tiedon jakamisen tarvetta.

Maahanmuuttajayhdistysten edustus neuvottelukunnissa ja muissa päätöksentekoeleimissä on ollut melko heikkoa. Yhdistyksiä kuuluu sekä Espoon että Vantaan monikulttuurisuusasiain neuvottelukuntiin, mutta niiden edustajat osallistuvat vain työryhmissä tehtävään suunnittelutyöhön. Helsingin ulkomaalaisasiain neuvottelukuntaan ei kuulu maahanmuuttajayhdistysten edustajia. Tähän on vaikuttanut se, että on ollut vaikea löytää demokraattinen tapa huomioida kaikki kaupungin maahanmuuttajayhdistykset. Valtakunnallisella tasolla, ETNO – Etnisten suhteiden neuvottelukunta -ei toisella toimikaudellaan valinnut jäseniään maahanmuuttajien yhdistysjäsenyyden vaan suurimpien kieliryhmien perusteella. Maahanmuuttajayhdistysten jäsenet ja muut etnisten vähemmistöjen edustajat valittiin vasta ETNO:n kolmannelle kaudelle (2005–2007).

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